

# A303

## Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling Scheme

Report on Public Consultation

## Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>8</b>
1.1. Overview	8
1.2. Structure of the report	8
1.3. The scheme – A303 Sparkford to Ilchester	9
<b>2. Stakeholder engagement and planning for public consultation</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1. Introduction	12
2.2. Stakeholder engagement process	12
2.3. Engagement with local authorities	12
2.4. Engagement with environmental bodies	13
2.5. Engagement with landholders	15
2.6. Engagement with hard-to-reach groups	15
2.7. Engagement with the local community	15
2.8. Strategic traffic users and transport organisations	16
<b>3. Approach to Consultation</b>	<b>17</b>
3.1. Introduction	17
3.2. Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)	17
<b>4. The non-statutory public consultation</b>	<b>21</b>
4.1. Introduction	21
4.2. Consultation programme	24
4.3. Publicising the public consultation	26
4.4. Public information points	26
4.5. Taking account of feedback	27
<b>5. Overview of consultation feedback</b>	<b>28</b>
5.1. Analysis of feedback	28
5.2. Consultation questionnaire results	28
5.3. Common concerns	44
Flooding	44
Environmental impact	44
Non-motorised users	45
Scheme design and junction positioning for the local communities	45
5.4. Summary of design suggestions from consultation feedback	46
<b>6. Conclusions and next steps</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Glossary</b>	<b>50</b>
Appendix A – Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)	51
Appendix B – Organisations invited to respond to the consultation	60
Appendix C – Response Logs	63
Appendix D – Public consultation materials	119
Appendix E – Letter responses to the consultation from organisations	128

## Executive Summary

### Context

The section of the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester in Somerset is one of a programme of schemes along the A303 in the Government's Road Investment Strategy: for the 2015/16 – 2019/20 Road Period (Department for Transport, March 2015). The A303 together with the A358 forms the most direct strategic link from the South West to London and the South East. More than a third of the route is single carriageway which causes significant congestion, particularly during weekends and the summer months. The A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester is largely single carriageway and suffers some of the worst congestion along the route. Recognising this context, the Government's strategy is to upgrade the entire A303/A358 route to a dual-carriageway expressway between the M3 near Basingstoke and the M5 at Taunton.

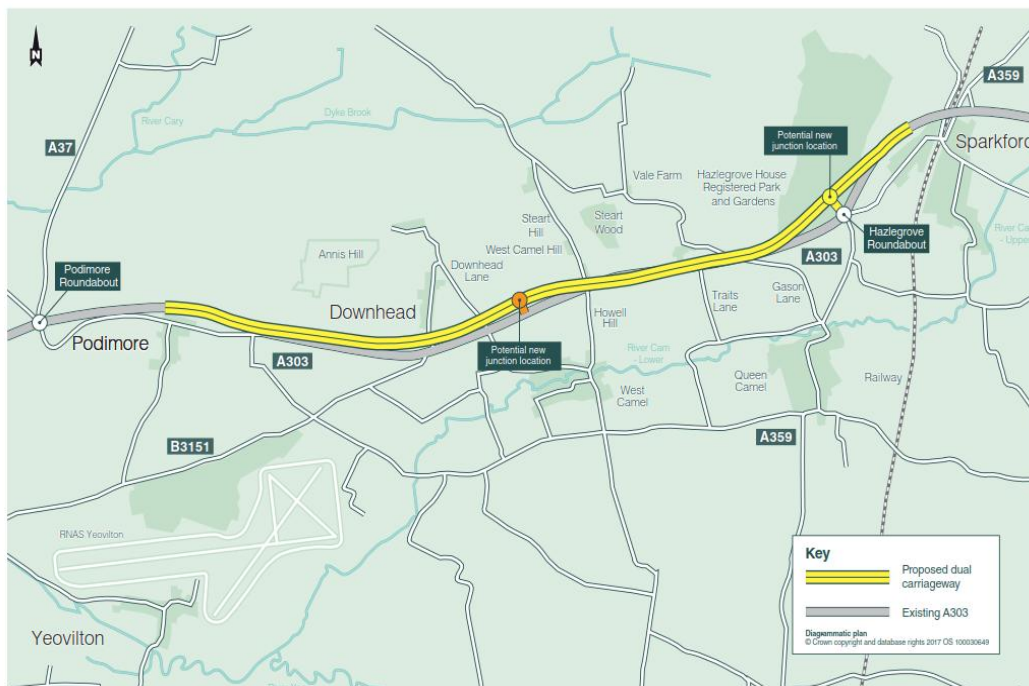
### Public consultation

As part of the Sparkford to Ilchester scheme development, Highways England held a public consultation from 14 February to 29 March 2017 to:

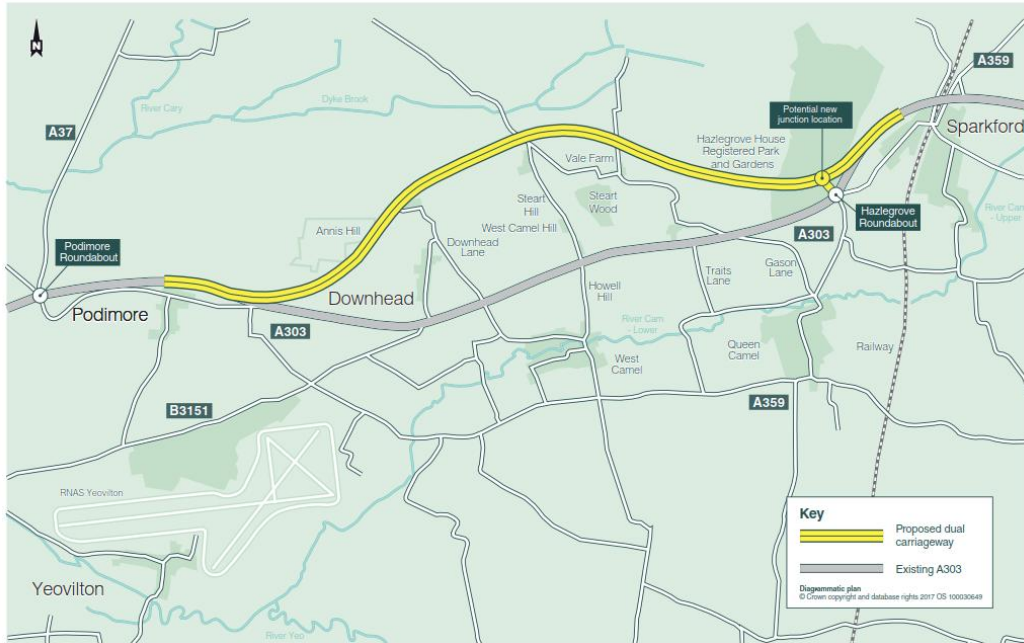
- raise awareness of the scheme
- gain relevant and appropriate feedback to help inform decision-making on the Preferred Route
- understand how the proposed scheme can be improved

At the public consultation, Highways England sought feedback on two route options:

- Option 1, following the existing corridor of the A303 very closely.



- Option 2, running to the north of the existing A303 between Sparkford and Podimore.



The consultation period ran between 14 February and 29 March 2017. The following events were held:

**Preview event for elected representatives**

Date	Venue
Thursday 14 February 2017	Haynes Motor Museum

**Landholder events**

Date	Venue
Wednesday 15 February 2017	Haynes Motor Museum
Thursday 16 February 2017	Haynes Motor Museum

**Public Events**

Date	Venue
Thursday 23 February 2017	Sparkford Inn, High Street
Saturday 25 February 2017	Queen Camel Memorial Hall
Thursday 9 March 2017	Red Lion Pub, Bab Cary
Friday 10 March 2017	Davis Hall, West Camel

People were made aware of the public consultation and events through mailed letters and by information published on Highways England’s website, local authority and parish council websites and in the local media.

The following consultation material was made available:

- public consultation scheme brochure;
- scheme maps; and
- Technical Appraisal Report.

Feedback was invited via a public consultation questionnaire.

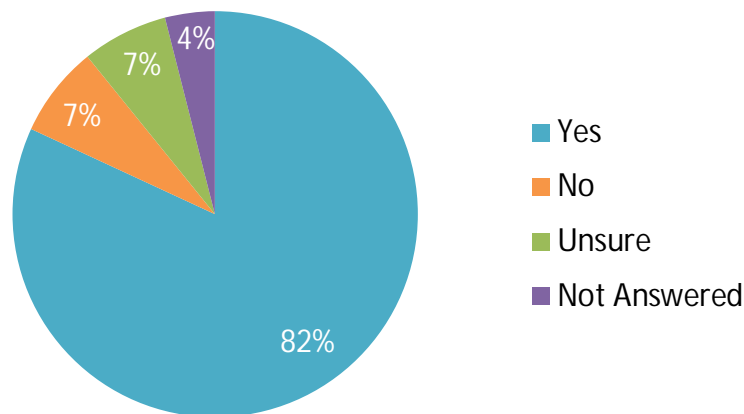
**Consultation Feedback**

The consultation public events were attended by 735 people and a total of 1,237 questionnaires were returned. The key findings are:

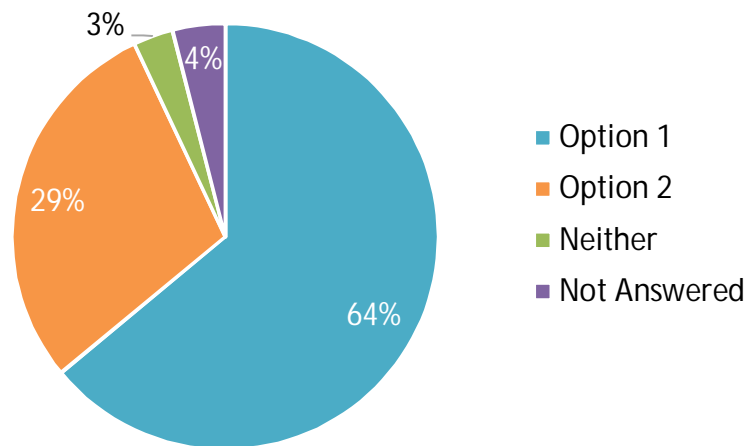
1. The number of respondents who think that there is a need to improve the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester is 82 per cent.
2. Of those who responded, 64 per cent prefer Option 1.

These findings are illustrated on Figures E-1 & E-2 below.

**Figure E-1: Do you agree the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester needs upgrading to a dual carriageway?**



**Figure E-2: Which option do you prefer?**



It was clear from the consultation findings that there was overwhelming agreement for the proposed upgrading to a dual carriageway, with a significant majority preferring Option 1. The main considerations raised by respondents centred on:

- flooding issues;
- environmental effects;
- safe provision for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians; and
- the need for ready, safe access with the local road network.

These and all other consultation comments have been responded to in this report through the Response Logs, found in Appendix C.

A Scheme Assessment Report has been published alongside this report, which sets out the work done since consultation to inform the choice of Option 1 as the preferred route. A copy of the Scheme Assessment Report can be viewed on the scheme website <https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/he/a303-sparkford-to-ilchester/>

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Overview

- 1.1.1. This consultation report provides an account of the non-statutory public consultation undertaken from 14 February to 29 March 2017 on route options for the A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling scheme. It provides a full account of:
- how the strategy for the non-statutory public consultation was developed to be consistent with what will be required at the next stage of statutory consultation which will precede the application for a Development Consent Order (DCO);
  - how the public consultation was undertaken; and
  - the feedback received and Highways England's response
- 1.1.2. Proposals for dualling this section of A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester were first investigated in the 1990s and were most recently announced in the Road Investment Strategy (RIS): for the 2015/16 – 2019/20 Road Period (Department for Transport, March 2015). The A303 together with the A358 forms the most direct strategic link from the South West to London and the South East. More than a third of the route is single carriageway which causes significant congestion, particularly during weekends and the summer months. The A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester is largely single carriageway and suffers some of the worst congestion along the route. The A303 also has a number of safety issues, with accident rates above the national rate for equivalent A class trunk roads.
- 1.1.3. As set out in the RIS, the Government's strategy is to improve connectivity to the South West by upgrading the entire A303/A358 route to a dual-carriageway expressway from the M3, near Basingstoke, to the M5 at Taunton. This is aimed enhancing the economy of the South West which underperforms other regions across the country.
- 1.1.4. The Sparkford to Ilchester scheme is one of a planned programme of eight improvements along the A303/A358 corridor. It is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008. As such, Highways England is required to submit a Development Consent Order application to the Planning Inspectorate to gain permission to construct the scheme.

### 1.2. Structure of the report

- 1.2.1. Highways England has given careful consideration to the relevant guidance and advice notes from the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) and Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) when structuring all public engagement. This report describes compliant activities undertaken during the process detailing:
- The approach to consultation, including how Highways England informed, consulted and involved all statutory and non-statutory bodies, the local community and wider public.

- Feedback received and Highways England’s response, together with a summary of the main considerations raised.

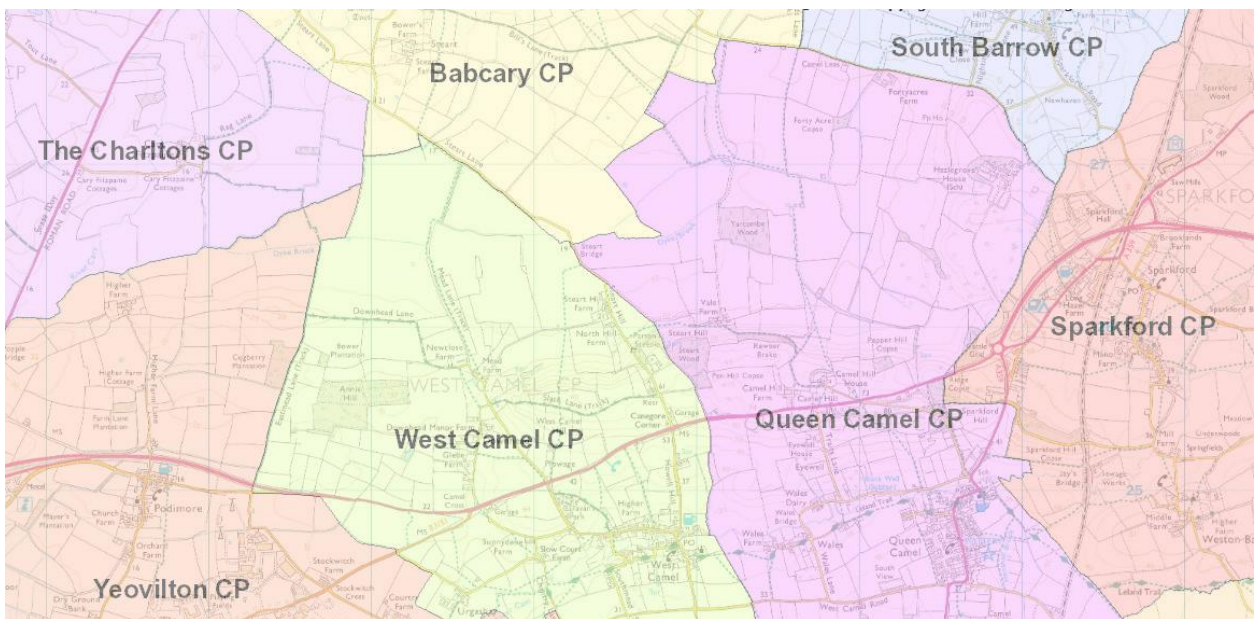
This report follows the following structure:

- Chapter 1 – Introduction
- Chapter 2 – Stakeholder engagement and planning for public consultation
- Chapter 3 – Approach to consultation
- Chapter 4 – The non-statutory public consultation
- Chapter 5 – Overview of the consultation feedback
- Chapter 6 – Conclusion and Next Steps

### 1.3. The scheme – A303 Sparkford to Ilchester

1.3.1. The existing A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester is located in the South Somerset District Council area in the county of Somerset. It passes through a predominantly rural area, consisting mainly of arable farmland. The parishes of Sparkford, Queen Camel, West Camel and Yeovilton are situated along the existing route, see Figure 1.1. The area is characterised by low-lying topography with clusters of higher-lying landscape features.

**Figure 1.1 Parishes in the vicinity of the A303 Sparkford to Ilchester scheme**



1.3.2. Improvements are needed to this section of the A303 to increase capacity, reduce congestion and improve the safety performance of one of the busiest stretches of the A303/A358 route corridor that connects London and the South East to the South West. The Government published its Road Investment Strategy (RIS) for the period between 2015/16 and 2019/20 in December 2014. The RIS explains the Government’s intention to upgrade all remaining single carriageway sections of the A303 and A358 between the M3



and the M5 near Taunton. These proposed works are part of a commitment to create an unbroken dual-carriageway expressway to the South West.

- 1.3.3. As well as being the arterial route from London and the South East to the South West, the A303 is the main road for road users living and working in adjacent local towns, including Ilchester and Yeovil as well as other smaller communities along the way. The section of the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester is largely single carriageway, which leads to localised congestion, impacting adversely on journey times and journey time reliability. On most weekdays, up to 26,000 vehicles use this single carriageway section, which is twice the designed capacity. At weekends in the summer the number of vehicles using this section of road can increase by nearly half as many again. Due to seasonal increases in traffic, average travel times can increase threefold or more on the westbound direction on a Friday in August, making it impossible to predict the time a journey will take. This traffic is forecast to increase further as local authorities located along the A303/A358 corridor seek to deliver economic growth and new development, with more jobs and houses.
- 1.3.4. The A303 corridor has the following issues:
- poor junction visibility
  - slow moving agricultural vehicles
  - limited opportunities for safe overtaking
  - increasing traffic levels outgrowing the capacity of the existing road design
- 1.3.5. The consequences of these issues are:
- congestion and longer journey times during peak times and during the summer months;
  - unreliable journey times;
  - queueing at the junctions due to the turning conflicts between local and strategic traffic
  - increased risk of accidents and incidents, with accident rates above the national rate for equivalent A class trunk roads causing delays and knock-on effects along interacting local routes.
- 1.3.6. To address these issues and support the strategy for delivering an expressway to the South West, the scheme has the following objectives:
- Support economic growth:
    - § Facilitate growth in employment at key locations and centres along the A303/A358/A30 corridor and to the South West Region.
    - § Facilitate growth in housing at key development hotspots along the corridor.
  - Capacity:
    - § Reduce delays and queues that occur during peak hours and at seasonal times of the year.
  - Resilience:
    - § Improve the resilience of the A303/A358/A30 route corridor.
  - Safety:
    - § safety along the A303/A358/A30 route corridor.
  - Connectivity:

- § Improve the connectivity of the south-west to the rest of the UK, to reduce peripherality and improve both business and growth prospects.
    - § Reduce severance on local communities; and,
    - § Promote and promote opportunities to improve the quality of life for local communities.
  - Environmental:
    - § Avoid unacceptable impacts on the surrounding natural and historic environment and landscape and optimise the environmental opportunities and mitigation that the intervention could bring.
  - Reduce severance on local communities.
  - Promote opportunities to improve the quality of life for local communities.
- 1.3.7. Throughout the design and delivery stages, the scheme is tasked with ensuring that customers and communities are fully considered. Specifically, this includes:
- Understanding the needs of all customers (including vulnerable users), stakeholders and Highways England scheme partners.
  - Responding to those needs such that the end-product delivers an improved customer experience.
  - Assessing the impact of the works on road users and communities, minimising disruption and delivering beneficial mitigation measures, looking at issues through customers' eyes.
- 1.3.8. Following an appraisal and sifting process set out in the Technical Appraisal Report (TAR), which can be found on the scheme website (<https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/he/a303-sparkford-to-ilchester/>), Highways England shortlisted two route options capable of delivering the scheme objectives (see Chapter 4).

## 2. Stakeholder engagement and planning for public consultation

### 2.1. Introduction

- 2.1.1. Scheme engagement commenced from December 2015 with local authorities and other organisations such as the National Farmers Union (NFU) and Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership (HotSWLEP), Environment Agency, Natural England, Historic England and National Trust.
- 2.1.2. A communications strategy was developed to identify and engage with a range of stakeholders prior to and during consultation. It described how local authorities, organisations and communities would be engaged through a planned scheme timetable and detailed different channels of communications that would be used to engage most effectively with differing stakeholders.

### 2.2. Stakeholder engagement process

- 2.2.1. An extensive mapping exercise was undertaken to identify relevant stakeholders and their key interests. A summary of stakeholder groups follows:
- Host local authorities – as key statutory stakeholders, engagement with host local authorities (namely Somerset County Council and South Somerset District Council) has assisted with the provision of detailed knowledge of local priorities including economic growth strategies, local planning and transport policy, environmental objectives, heritage designations and other potential issues of local interest that helped inform scheme development.
  - Environmental groups – environmental organisations were identified to help inform and assist with scheme environmental issues.
  - Landholders – potentially affected landholders were identified to establish a database compliant with relevant requirements of the Planning Act 2008. All landowners and tenants located within 150 metres of a proposed route option were designated as Section 44 consultees in accordance with the Planning Act 2008.
  - Hard-to-reach groups – discussions were had with the host local authorities to identify any known hard-to-reach groups in the vicinity of the scheme.
  - Local community stakeholders – community and business stakeholders were identified to assist with scheme development from their knowledge about local issues, priorities, concerns and aspirations.
  - Strategic traffic users and transport organisations – as directly affected users of the A303/A358 corridor, Highways England’s national stakeholders and relevant regional road users were identified, including business organisations, tourist groups, public transport providers, road user groups and emergency services.

### 2.3. Engagement with local authorities

- 2.3.1. Engagement with the host local authorities, Somerset CC and South Somerset DC, began in December 2015 and has continued throughout subsequent development of the scheme. A summary of meetings held is given in Table 2.1

**Table 2.1 Host local authority meetings**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Stakeholders attending</b>	<b>Topics raised</b>	<b>Discussion</b>
4 December 2015	Somerset County Council, South Somerset District Council	Introduction to the scheme and route options, Development Consent Order process, project timescales and engagement methodology.	Representatives confirmed their interest in the scheme and engagement approach. Initial discussions about scheme options.
22 March 2016	Somerset County Council, South Somerset District Council	Scheme update and public consultation strategy discussion.	Discussions about development of public consultation strategy and specific stakeholder identification and engagement activities.  Discussion about communications channels to be employed.
13 July 2016	Somerset County Council, South Somerset District Council	Stakeholder engagement progress meeting.  Discussion about public consultation activities timing.	Feedback about route options presented.  Discussion about planned public consultation programme.
11 November 2016	Somerset County Council, South Somerset District Council	Stakeholder engagement progress meeting.  Update about public consultation activities planned.	Consideration of specific groups including landholders, parish councils, local authority councillors and Members of Parliament.

## 2.4. Engagement with environmental bodies

2.4.1. Highways England engaged with the following statutory environmental bodies during the scheme's route options development period prior to public consultation, which continued into consultation itself:

- Environment Agency
- Natural England
- Historic England

2.4.2. The National Trust and the South West Heritage Trust were also engaged.

2.4.3. Engagement was by group meetings, telephone discussions and email channels. A summary of the meetings held is provided in Table 2.2 below.

**Table 2.2 Environmental body meetings**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Stakeholders attending</b>	<b>Topics raised</b>	<b>Discussion</b>
4 December 2015	National Trust, Environment Agency, and Natural England	Introduction to the scheme and route options, Development Consent Order process, project timescales and engagement methodology.	Representatives confirmed their interest in the scheme and engagement approach. Initial discussions about scheme options.
22 March 2016	National Trust, Environment Agency, South West Heritage Trust and Natural England	Scheme update and public consultation strategy discussion.	Discussions about development of public consultation strategy and specific stakeholder identification and engagement activities.  Discussion about communications channels to be employed.
13 July 2016	National Trust, Environment Agency, South West Heritage Trust and Natural England	Stakeholder engagement progress meeting. Discussion about public consultation activities timing.	Feedback about route options presented.  Discussion about planned public consultation programme.
11 November 2016	National Trust, Environment Agency, South West Heritage Trust and Natural England	Stakeholder engagement progress meeting. Update about public consultation activities planned.	Consideration of specific groups including, landowners, parish councils, local authority councillors and Members of Parliament.
15 March 2017	Historic England	On site meeting at Hazlegrove Registered Park and Garden.	Discussion about options under consideration that potentially affect Hazlegrove Registered Park and Garden and associated access from Hazlegrove Roundabout.

## **2.5. Engagement with landholders**

- 2.5.1. Relevant legislation and guidance describes the need to identify and consult with people who own, occupy or have an interest in the land the scheme affects. At this early stage in the scheme's development, wide buffer zones extending 150m from the two shortlisted route options were drawn and a database of all residents, landowners, tenants, businesses and organisations located within the buffer zones was established. The database is updated on a regular basis using Land Registry information, publicly available information from local authorities and Land Interest Questionnaires issued to landholders.
- 2.5.2. On behalf of farming landholding interests, Highways England also sought to engage the National Farmers Union. A meeting was held on 28 June 2016, when an overview of the scheme was given and the NFU provided feedback about the movement of farm goods and the need for ready access.

## **2.6. Engagement with hard-to-reach groups**

- 2.6.1. Equality, diversity and inclusion issues need to be considered in the development of the scheme. As part of this the host local authorities were consulted about identification of relevant hard-to-reach groups. Representative groups included non-motorised user groups such as the British Horse Society and Ramblers Association, who were subsequently invited to take part in the consultation.

## **2.7. Engagement with the local community**

- 2.7.1. Relevant legislation and guidance describes the need to identify and engage with local communities who will have an interest or may be potentially affected by the scheme proposals. As such, again recognising the early stage in the schemes' development, a wide buffer zone extending 1500 metres around the two route options was drawn (see map at Appendix A), and a database of all residents, businesses and organisations located within the zone was established.
- 2.7.2. In February 2016, an A303/A358 route corridor information event was held about the schemes planned along the corridor at the Podimore Inn, Podimore, at the western end of the scheme. The event was promoted widely to nearby local communities and community leaders. The importance of the A303/A358 route corridor was explained, as well as providing early understanding of the intention to improve the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester. The purpose of the information event was to engage the local communities and make them aware of the future road improvement scheme plans.
- 2.7.3. Contact was also established with the four parish councils through which the A303 Sparkford to Ilchester road passes (see Figure 1.1). The host parish

councils are Sparkford Parish Council, Queen Camel Parish Council, West Camel Parish Council and Yeovilton Parish Council.

- 2.7.4. Contact was also established with adjoining parish councils for the public consultation.
- 2.7.5. Households and businesses within the 1500 metres buffer zone were contacted by letter prior to public consultation events held in February and March 2017. The letter invited recipients to attend the public consultation events, visit public information points, view the scheme website and respond to the scheme option proposals by completing and returning a questionnaire online or by freepost.

## **2.8. Strategic traffic users and transport organisations**

- 2.8.1. The organisations invited to participate in the public consultation can be found at Appendix B.

### 3. Approach to Consultation

#### 3.1. Introduction

- 3.1.1. Highways England chose to follow the “Pre-Application Guidance” published by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) as the basis of carrying out the early (non-statutory) public consultation on route options for the A303 Sparkford to Ilchester scheme. This guidance is considered to be best practice for public consultation of nationally significant infrastructure projects.
- 3.1.2. The full DCLG guidance document can be viewed at the following website: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/418009/150326\\_Pre-Application\\_Guidance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/418009/150326_Pre-Application_Guidance.pdf).

#### 3.2. Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)

- 3.2.1. A non-statutory Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) was developed to provide explanation of how Highways England would consult about the route options proposals. To help develop the SoCC, Highways England engaged with the host local authorities’ communications and community officers. Table 3.1 shows the working group meetings that took place. Table 3.2 shows a summary of the SoCC, and a full copy can be found in Appendix A.

**Table 3.1 SoCC Working Group Meetings**

Date	Stakeholders	Topics raised	Discussion
14 January 2016	Somerset County Council, South Somerset District Council	Scheme overview and building collaborative relationships.	Awareness of channels of communication.
22 March 2016	Somerset County Council, South Somerset District Council	Explanation of the non-statutory and statutory consultation process, Development Consent Order process, development of the SoCC.	Acknowledgement of need to engage with local parish councils and ward members.
26 May 2016	Somerset County Council, South Somerset District Council	Discussion of draft SoCC, public consultation dates, update on consultation process, progress on the project, equality strategy.	Discussions about planned roll-out of public consultation programme and methodologies proposed.



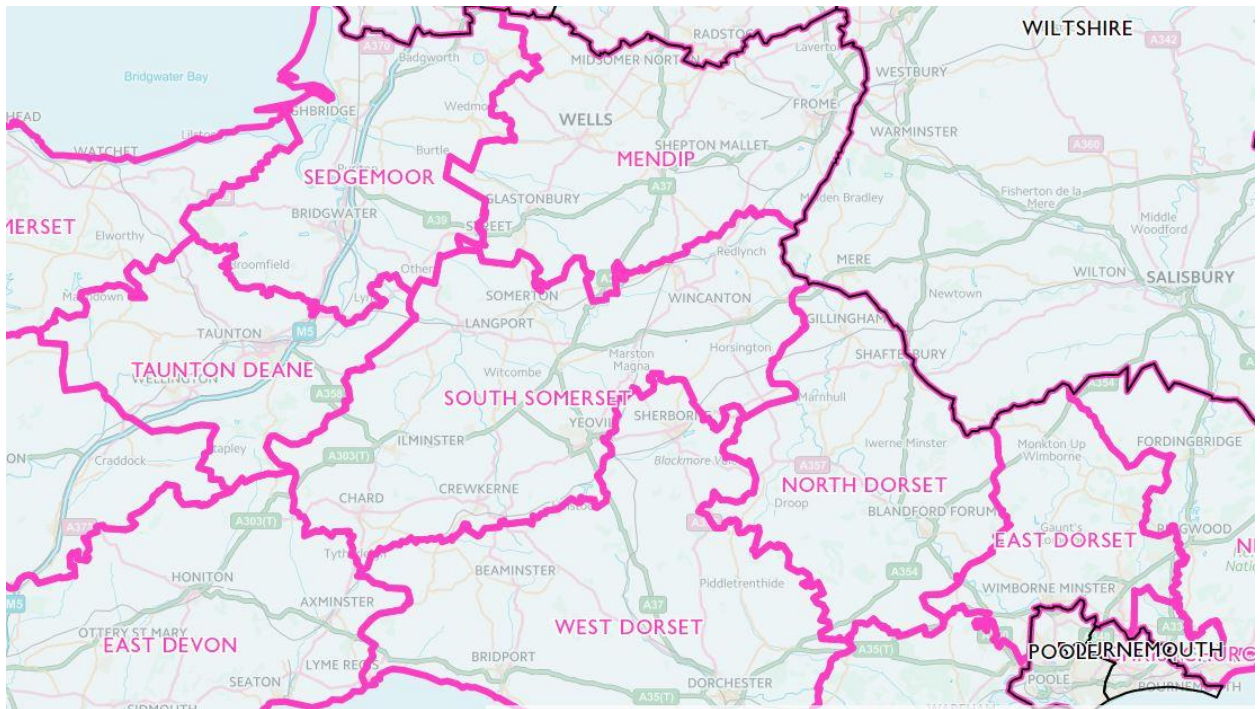
**Table 3.2 Summary of SoCC approach**

<b>Method</b>	<b>Detail</b>
<b>Public information events</b>	<p>Public information events will be held at locations along the route of the scheme to offer people an opportunity to view the proposed route options, speak with the project team and provide feedback.</p> <p>The local community, businesses and road users will be informed of the events through channels including written communications, the Highways England website and local media.</p> <p>Information on how to provide consultation feedback will be available at the events and the Highways England website. A printed questionnaire will be available for members of the public to provide feedback and these can be left with the project team, posted free of charge to a freepost address or emailed to us.</p> <p>Information will be available to members of the public detailing how to provide feedback online at the Highways England website.</p>
<b>Public information points</b>	<p>Information advertising the public information events will be on view at specified public information points.</p> <p>Consultation brochures will be available at public information points for the local community and other road users to review and take away.</p> <p>Information about how the local community, businesses and other road users can provide consultation feedback will be available at the public information points.</p> <p>A printed questionnaire will be available for members of the local community and other road users to provide feedback at the public information points and these can be posted free of charge or emailed to us.</p> <p>Information detailing how to provide feedback online at the Highways England website will be available.</p>
<b>Project website</b>	<p>Details of the scheme background, the need for the scheme and the proposed route options will be provided on the scheme web page at <a href="http://www.highways.gov.uk/Sparkford-to-Ilchester">www.highways.gov.uk/Sparkford-to-Ilchester</a>.</p> <p>Supporting route options stage, documents including the consultation brochure will be available to download or print.</p> <p>A questionnaire will be available for members of the local community and other road users to provide feedback online.</p>
<b>Written communication</b>	<p>We will send residents and businesses inside the consultation zone an information letter that explains the proposed route options and the issues being consulted on. The letters will invite people to the public information events and detail how consultation feedback can be provided to us.</p>

Method	Detail
	<p>Other key stakeholder organisations and identified special interest groups will also receive information letters that explain the route options stage proposals and the issues being consulted on. The letters will invite recipients to the public information events and detail how consultation feedback can be provided to us.</p> <p>Individuals or organisations that have registered to receive further communications on the Highways England scheme web page will be sent information emails that explain the proposed route options and the issues being consulted on. The emails will invite recipients to the public information events and detail how consultation feedback can be provided to us.</p>
<b>Consultation brochure</b>	<p>We will produce a consultation brochure providing information about the route options stage proposals, the need for the scheme and the issues being consulted on. The brochure will be available to view on the Highways England scheme web page.</p> <p>The consultation brochure will also be available at public information events and public information points.</p> <p>Copies of the consultation brochure can be provided free of charge by request to Highways England.</p>
<b>Representatives at local groups and forums</b>	<p>We welcome contact from local groups and forums. Where it is considered that there is a relevant interest and where a visit is considered proportionate and appropriate, we will attend a local event to discuss the route options stage consultation.</p>
<b>Hard-to-reach groups</b>	<p>Appropriate and proportionate consultation tools for hard-to-reach groups include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Presentations to community groups and organisations</li> <li>· Appropriate direct engagement with, for example, younger people and disabled people and representative groups</li> <li>· Provision of appropriate and accessible materials in local community/hard-to-reach centres</li> <li>· Provision of appropriate and accessible materials (i.e. in large print and alternative languages if requested)</li> <li>· Venues chosen for public events to be compliant with the Equality Act 2010</li> </ul>
<b>Route options stage consultation updates</b>	<p>The local community and other road users will be updated about progress of the route options stage consultation through channels including written communications, the Highways England website, local media and local authority websites, newsletters and social media.</p>
<b>Consultation feedback</b>	<p>Written feedback can be made either online or in writing to Highways England at the following addresses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· <a href="mailto:A303SparkfordtolIlchesterDualling@highwaysengland.co.uk">A303SparkfordtolIlchesterDualling@highwaysengland.co.uk</a></li> <li>· A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling, 2/07K Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol. BS1 6HA</li> </ul>

3.2.2. The adjoining local authorities to South Somerset, shown on Figure 3.1 were also engaged during the development of the non-statutory SoCC.

**Figure 3.1 Map of adjacent local authorities**



## 4. The non-statutory public consultation

### 4.1. Introduction

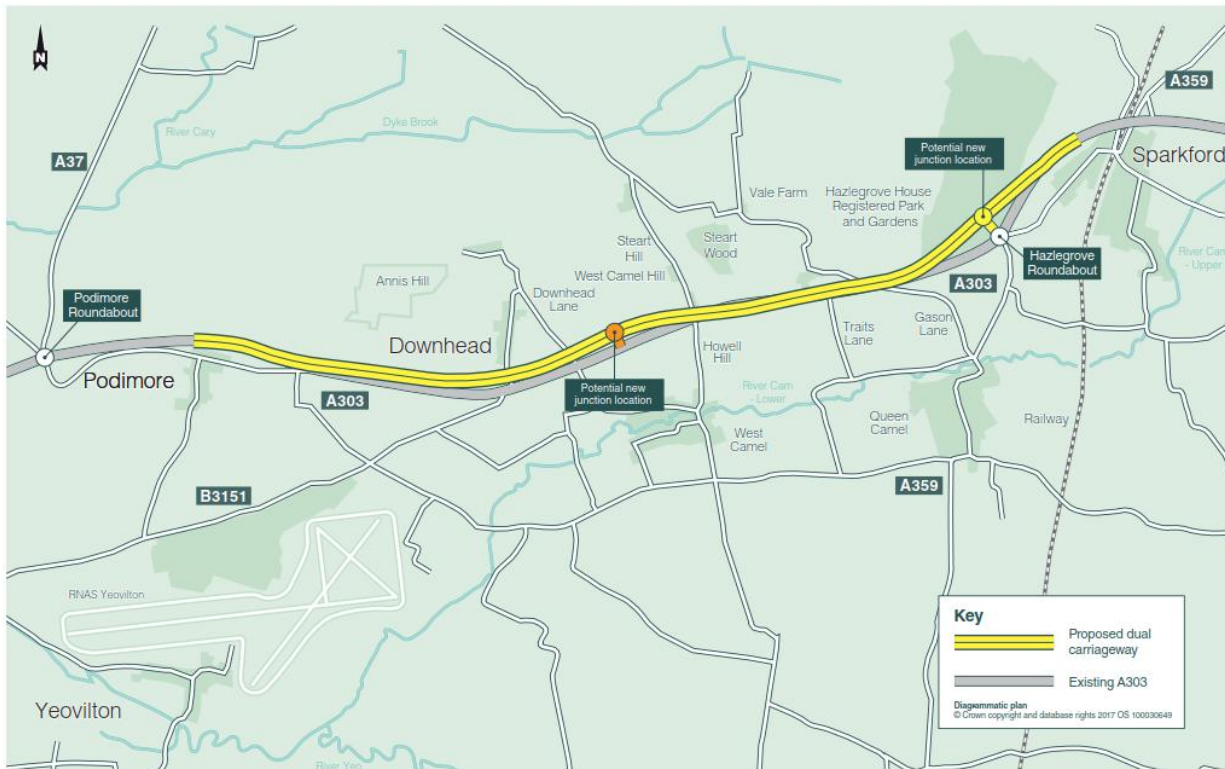
4.1.1. The non-statutory public consultation on route options took place from 14 February to 29 March 2017. A website hosted details of the proposed route options including supporting documentation such as the scheme brochure, consultation questionnaire and Technical Appraisal Report (see <https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/he/a303-sparkford-to-ilchester>) and the route option proposals were presented at four public exhibitions in February and March where the public could discuss the proposals with members of the project team.

4.1.2. The public consultation presented and sought feedback on two route options.

### Option 1 Overview

4.1.3. Route Option 1 follows the existing corridor of the A303 very closely (see Figure 4.1). It is considered to be the online option, being closely aligned just to the side of the existing carriageway as appropriate, to allow re-use of the existing road for local access, to avoid property and to facilitate construction. At its maximum offset, the route is typically 100m either north or south of the existing A303.

Figure 4.1 Route Option 1 Map

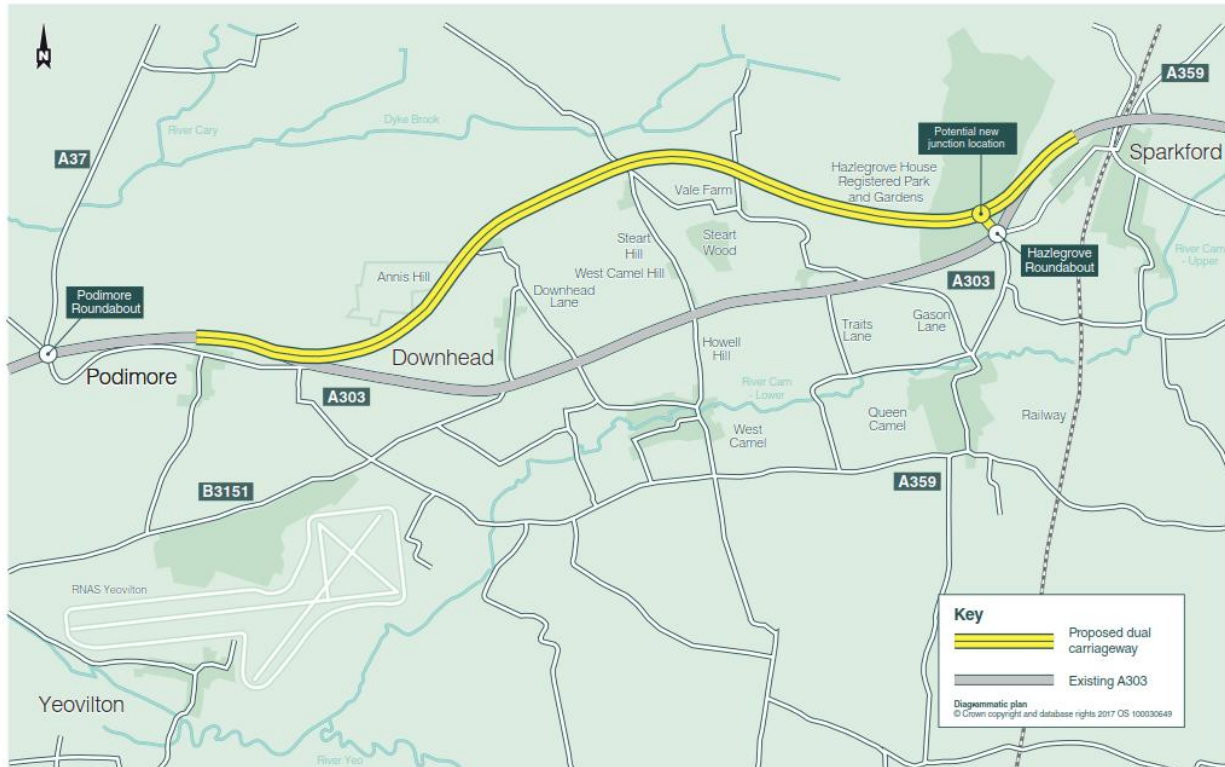


- 4.1.4. At its western end, Option 1 would tie-in with the existing A303 Podimore Bypass (a dual carriageway). Travelling eastwards, the route would move north of the existing A303 single carriageway, allowing it to be retained for use as a parallel local road. The route would then rise up West Camel Hill before crossing over the existing A303 at the junction with Steart Hill / Howell Hill. The route would then take a southerly alignment briefly before meeting up with the existing road again to pass between the scheduled monument at Vale Farm and the MOD signal station at Eyewell / Traits Lane. Finally, the route would then bypass the existing Hazlegrove Roundabout to the north through the Registered Park and Garden associated with Hazlegrove House, before tying into the existing A303 north of Sparkford Village.
- 4.1.5. A new all-movement grade-separated junction is likely to be provided at Hazlegrove. This would provide connections to Hazlegrove House, the A359 and access to villages south of the route. A limited-movement junction, comprising only east-facing slip roads, is likely to be provided at Downhead. A limited-movement junction would be provided at Camel Cross comprising a westbound exit slip road and connections to the B3151 and the existing A303. At the western end of the scheme, a westbound entry slip would be provided to access the proposed route from the existing A303 and Podimore village.
- 4.1.6. A connection would be provided between Traits Lane and Camel Hill, via an underbridge. This underbridge would also accommodate the long-distance walking route known as Celtic Way. A connection would be provided between Howell Hill and Steart Hill via an overbridge. At the western end of the scheme, a connection would be provided to access Podimore village to and from the existing A303, in the form of a two-way single carriageway built to local road standards.

## Option 2 Overview

- 4.1.7. Route Option 2 takes an offline course to the north of the existing route (Figure 4.2). At its maximum distance, the route is approximately 1km north of the existing A303.

Figure 4.2 Route Option 2 Map



- 4.1.8. Immediately east of the tie-in with the Podimore Bypass Option 2, would bear north-east passing Annis Hill to the south-east. The route would then pass immediately north-west of Newclose Farm and continue north-east so that it runs close to, but not into, the Dyke Brook flood plain. The topography here is low-lying and the route is thus separated from the existing road by intermediate hills of West Camel Hill and Camel Hill which lie between the proposed route and the existing A303. The proposed route would then bear south-east, passing Vale Farm Cottages, then skirting around the foot of Camel Hill and through the Registered Park and Gardens of Hazlegrove House to re-join the existing A303, north of Sparkford Village.
- 4.1.9. The existing A303 carriageway would be left in place to provide access to local villages such as West Camel and Downhead. Connections would be provided between the retained carriageway and the proposed Hazlegrove Junction at the eastern end and the Podimore Bypass at the western end. The road known as Steart Hill, which provides a route from the existing A303 to Babcary, would be retained via a bridge over the proposed dual carriageway. There is a chance that a small part of the northern approach ramp of the Steart Hill overbridge would encroach upon the edge of the Dyke Brook flood plain. Further design and assessment work would be required to determine the extent of this encroachment and the mitigation required to address it. The Byway known as Downhead Lane would be retained via a

bridge over the proposed dual carriageway. A bridge over the proposed access track would be provided as access from Vale Farm to the north. This bridge would also accommodate the long-distance walking route known as Celtic Way.

## 4.2. Consultation programme

- 4.2.1. The six-week public consultation period commenced on 14 February 2017 and ended on 29 March 2017.
- 4.2.2. The consultation event programme started with an invitation-event for elected representatives, affording them the opportunity to view and discuss the scheme options proposals with the project team ahead of the public events in the local area. Local district and parish councillors were invited so that they could be informed about the scheme option proposals prior to subsequent discussion with constituents.
- 4.2.3. Tables 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 below detail the date, time and location of the consultation events held.

**Table 4.1 Invitation preview event**

Date	Venue	Time
Thursday 14 February 2017	Haynes Motor Museum, Wolverlands, Sparkford, Yeovil BA22 7LH	6pm to 8pm

**Table 4.2 Landholder events**

Date	Venue	Time
Wednesday 15 February 2017	Haynes International Motor Museum Sparkford, Yeovil, Somerset BA22 7LH	11am to 7pm
Thursday 16 February 2017		Appointment only

**Table 4.3 Public Events**

Date	Venue	Time
Thursday 23 February 2017	Sparkford Inn, High Street, Sparkford, Yeovil, BA22 7JH	12pm to 8pm
Saturday 25 February 2017	Queen Camel Memorial Hall, High Street, Queen Camel, Yeovil, BA22 7NF	10am to 5pm
Thursday 9 March 2017	Red Lion, Babcary TA11 7ED	6pm to 8.30pm
Friday 10 March 2017	Davis Hall, Howell Hill, West Camel, Yeovil, BA22 7QX	10am to 6pm

- 4.2.4. An overview of public consultation events is set out below:

**Launch event** – an evening event was held for local elected representatives and a total of 20 people attended.

**Landholder events** – Events were held for landowners and tenants with land interests within 150 metres of the scheme. These events were by appointment only, where landholders could discuss land issues with specialists from the project team. Over the two landowner events there were 23 appointments.

**Public events**<sup>1</sup> - The public events provided valuable insight into the views held by the local communities and how they use the existing road network. There were four public events held at venues along both route options, with a total number of 735 people visiting the events. The materials displayed at the exhibition are available to view on the scheme website, as listed in Appendix D.

4.2.5. A scheme website was launched where consultation materials could be viewed and information about how to respond to the consultation was available. The website can be viewed at:

<https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/he/a303-sparkford-to-ilchester/>

4.2.6. A series of consultation materials were made available at public information events and on the scheme website. These materials included:

- Consultation brochure;
- Consultation questionnaire;
- Technical Appraisal Report; and
- Environment Constraints Map.

4.2.7. Additional presentations were undertaken at the request of Sparkford Parish Council and South Somerset District Council and these meetings are summarised in Table 4.4 below.

**Table 4.4 Additional stakeholder presentations**

Date	Stakeholders attending	Topics raised	Discussion
28 February 2017	South Somerset District Council	Presentation followed by questions and answers.	Scheme overview, Development Consent Order process, future liaison.
6 March 2017	Sparkford Parish Council	Presentation followed by questions and answers.	Scheme overview, Development Consent Order process, future liaison.

<sup>1</sup> **Additional requested event** – Originally, at the start of consultation, three public events were planned. However, some residents suggested that, while the three planned events were convenient for Option 1, they were less convenient for residents living closer to Option 2. Therefore, an additional event was held at the Red Lion, Babcary to ensure that local residents who lived closer to Option 2 were given a convenient opportunity to attend a consultation event. A total of 42 people attended the Babcary event.



### 4.3. Publicising the public consultation

- 4.3.1. The public consultation period was promoted in accordance with the SoCC in the following ways:
- Letters sent to 111 organisations outlining the scheme proposals and drawing attention to the scheme website and public consultation events, including an invitation to attend the preview event for Councillors. The organisations included representatives of hard-to-reach groups, such as the Ramblers Association and the British Horse Society representing non-motorised users. An example letter sent to organisations can be found in Appendix D.
  - Letters sent to 113 potentially affected landowners and tenants outlining the scheme proposals and drawing attention to the scheme website, public information points (see Table 4.5 below) and public consultation events, and including an invitation to book an individual appointment at a landholder event. This letter can be found in Appendix D.
  - Letters sent to 3,297 addresses located within 1500 metres of a scheme option outlining the scheme proposals and drawing attention to the scheme website, public information points and public consultation events. This letter can be found
  - Department for Transport press release on 13 February to local media, explaining scheme proposal and promoting details of the public consultation. This can be found in Appendix D.
  - BBC Somerset interview with Highways England project manager.
  - Scheme website with all details of the route option proposals and consultation material, including the means to contact Highways England and to complete an online questionnaire.
  - A poster was displayed at all public information points, advertising the times and venues of the public information events. This can be found on the scheme website.

### 4.4. Public information points

- 4.4.1. Public information points were selected in the vicinity of the scheme proposal and in nearby towns to provide people with the opportunity to collect the consultation brochure and questionnaire if they were unable to attend one of the scheduled public events. The non-statutory SoCC working group was consulted in the selection of these venues to ensure Highways England had selected venues suitable for the local public to access. The locations of the public information points are detailed in Table 4.5 below.

**Table 4.5 Public Information Points**

<b>Public Information Points</b>	
Wincanton Library, 7 Carrington Way, Wincanton, Somerset, BA9 9JS	Barrington Court, Barrington, Ilminster, TA19 0NQ
Yeovil Library, King George Street, Yeovil, Somerset, BA20 1PZ	Lytes Cary Manor, near Somerton, Somerset, TA11 7HU

South Petherton Library, St. James Street, South Petherton, Somerset, TA13 5BS	Montacute House, Montacute, TA15 6XP
Taunton Library, Paul Street, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 3XZ	Somerset County Council, County Hall, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 4DY
Martock Library, The Shopping Centre, Martock, Somerset, TA12 6DL	South Somerset District Council, Brympton Way, Yeovil, Somerset, BA20 2HT

4.4.2. At the Public Information Points the following consultation material was available:

- consultation scheme brochure
- consultation scheme questionnaire and freepost envelope
- poster detailing public events and scheme website

#### **4.5. Taking account of feedback**

4.5.1. The public consultation ended on 29 March 2017, when the scheme website was closed for questionnaire submissions. Highways England accepted submissions sent to the freepost address for a period of two weeks after the end of the public consultation period. All paper entries, letters and emails received were added to the database for analysis. Views expressed and matters raised were extracted and included in a Response Log for consideration and response by Highways England (see Appendix C).

## 5. Overview of consultation feedback

### 5.1. Analysis of feedback

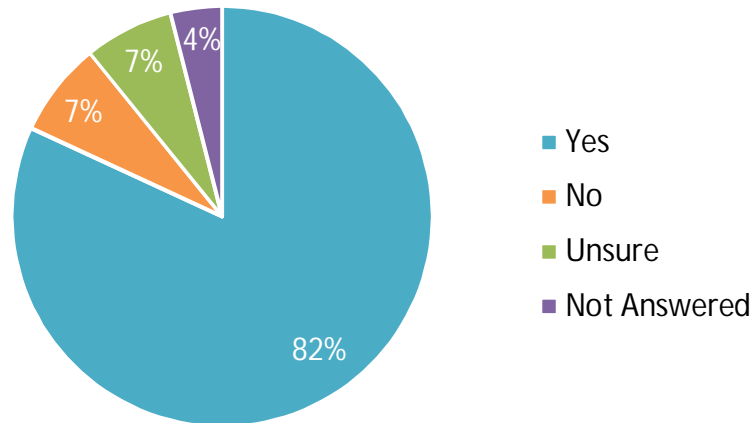
- 5.1.1. The consultation period closed on 29 March 2017, with 1,237 responses received. The questionnaire responses received were primarily from members of the local communities, with a number of statutory and non-statutory bodies submitting formal reports and letters in place of a questionnaire. The additional reports and letters have been combined with the free text comments provided via the questionnaires for analysis.
- 5.1.2. Of the 1,237 questionnaires received, 389 paper questionnaires were submitted to the freepost address. These were combined with the electronic responses and analysed collectively.
- 5.1.3. Analysis of the questionnaire feedback has identified seven themes under which the matters raised which have been collated and summarised for response by Highways England. The seven themes are to do with comments about:
- junction proposals
  - buildability & construction
  - highways design
  - non-motorised user provision
  - local community considerations
  - views on the public consultation
  - environmental considerations
- 5.1.4. All matters raised by individual members of the public in their feedback comments have been collated and summarised under the above themes in Response Logs contained in Appendix C, which also contain Highways England's responses to those matters.
- 5.1.5. In relation to the feedback received by letter from statutory and non-statutory bodies, their consultation responses are presented in full in Appendix E. In addition, the matters raised by each body have been summarised in a separate Response Log contained in Appendix C, along with Highways England's response to those matters.

### 5.2. Consultation questionnaire results

- 5.2.1. The questionnaire results have been recorded and collated as presented in this chapter, starting with Question 1 as follows.

5.2.2. **Question 1- Do you agree the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester needs upgrading to a dual carriageway?**

**Figure 5.1: Agreement about need for upgrading**



5.2.3. Figure 5.1 shows that of those who responded, there was overwhelming agreement that the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester should be upgraded to dual carriageway.

5.2.4. **Question 2 - Please provide any comments to support your answer**

5.2.5. Question 2 sought to gain an understanding of the reasons behind the views expressed in Question 1.

**Representative feedback from respondents in support of an upgrade:**

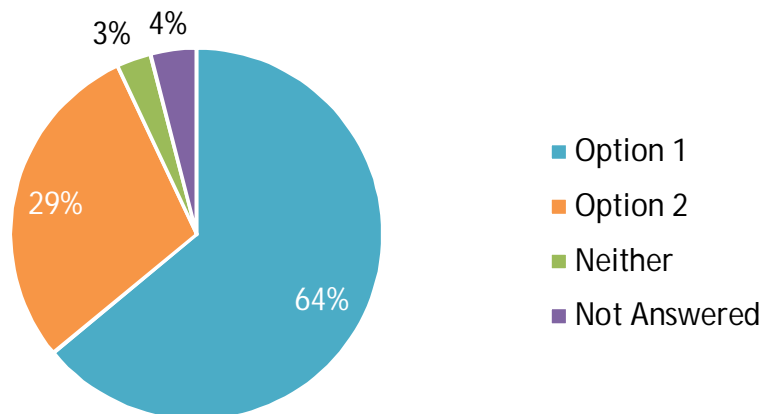
- *“Improvements would reduce congestion”*
- *“Improve safety and reduce accidents”*
- *“Overcapacity and difficult to gain access”*
- *“A constant bottleneck, new road will remove this”*
- *“Will help with the volume of holiday traffic – Thursday evening – Sunday and improve the journey through to the South West.”*
- *“Dualling is essential to manage overcrowding and traffic flow”*
- *“Absolutely vital”*
- *“Reduce pollution with better flowing traffic”*

**Representative feedback from respondents not in support of an upgrade:**

- *“It would impact on businesses”*
- *“Homes could be lost”*
- *“Impact on the environment”*
- *“Improvements only necessary to help Friday - Sunday holiday traffic”*

### 5.2.6. Question 3 - Which option do you prefer?

**Figure 5.2: Option Preference**



5.2.7. Figure 5.2 shows that more than twice as many favour Option 1 over Option 2.

### 5.2.8. Question 4 - Reason for your preferred option:

5.2.9. Question 4 asked respondents to provide reasons for the preferred option selected in Question 3. Reasons have been separated into support for Option 1 or Option 2.

#### **Option 1:**

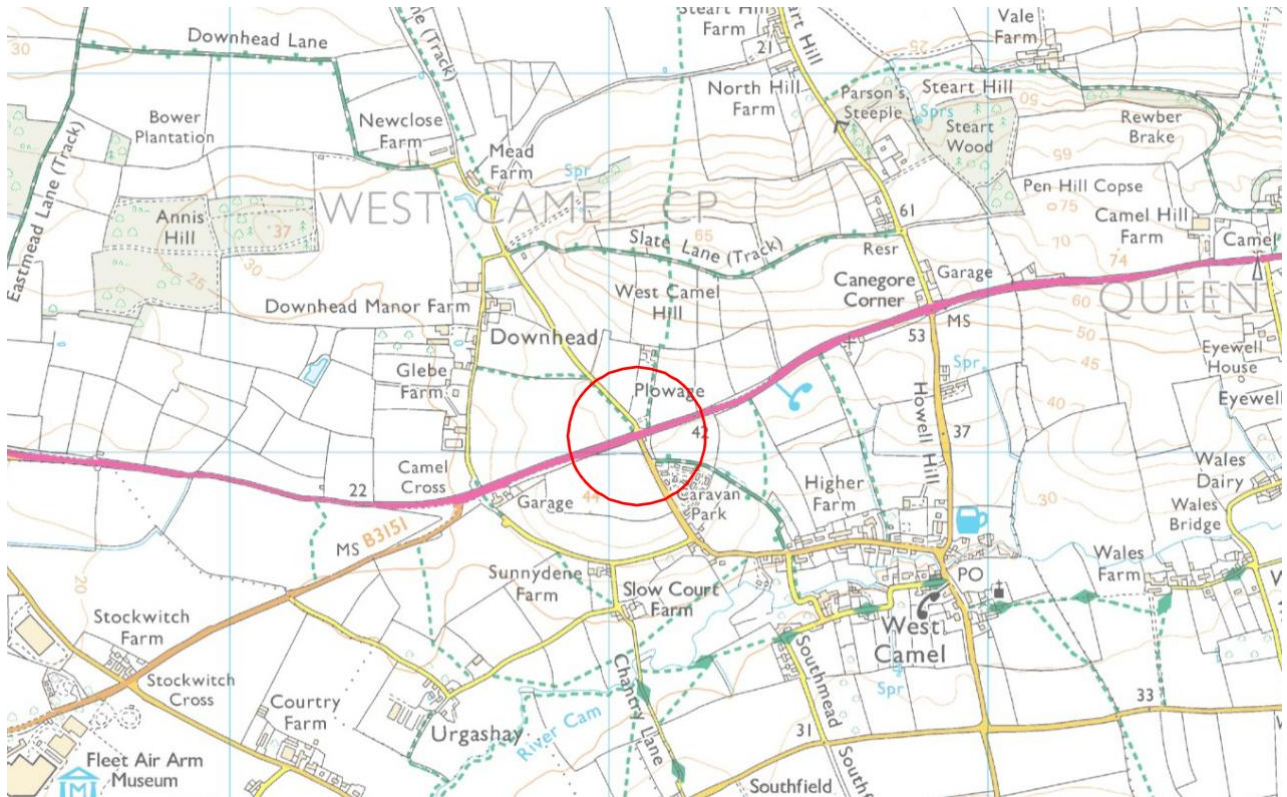
- preserves the countryside
- minimises land-take
- uses the existing road

#### **Option 2:**

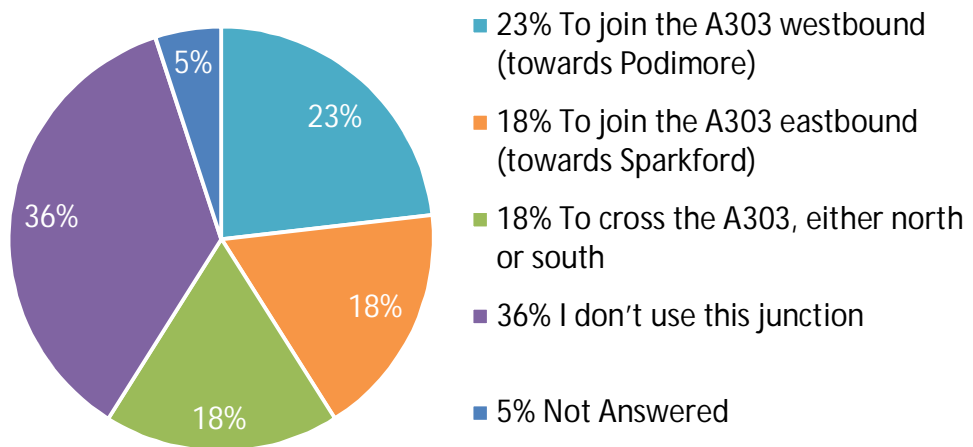
- easier to construct
- would allow the existing A303 to be used as a local road
- takes the road away from the local villages, reducing noise

5.2.10. **Question 5 - Do you use the existing crossroad junction at Downhead Lane for the following<sup>2</sup>?**

**Figure 5.3: Map of the existing Downhead Lane junction**



**Figure 5.4: Use of Downhead Lane junction**



5.2.11. Figure 5.4 shows that 41% of respondents stated they used the crossroads to join the A303 in either direction and 18% used the junction simply to cross the A303.

<sup>2</sup> There was a list of options to tick as represented in Figure 5.4

**5.2.12. Question 6 - If this junction (Downhead) did not exist; what route would you take?**

5.2.13. Respondents stated that the presence of a junction at Downhead Lane as shown in Figure 5.5: is necessary to avoid rat-running through the local villages. Without the junction or an alternative replacement, respondents highlighted concerns about HGVs using the narrow village lanes to travel.

**Figure 5.5: Map of Downhead Junction Area**



5.2.14. From the questionnaire responses, the locations listed below were identified as alternative access points to the A303, if Downhead Junction did not exist. Pictured on the next pages are maps highlighting the identified access point locations (Figure 5.6 to Figure 5.9).

- Podimore Roundabout
- Sparkford Roundabout
- Ilchester
- Haynes Motor Museum

Figure 5.6: Map of Podimore Roundabout location

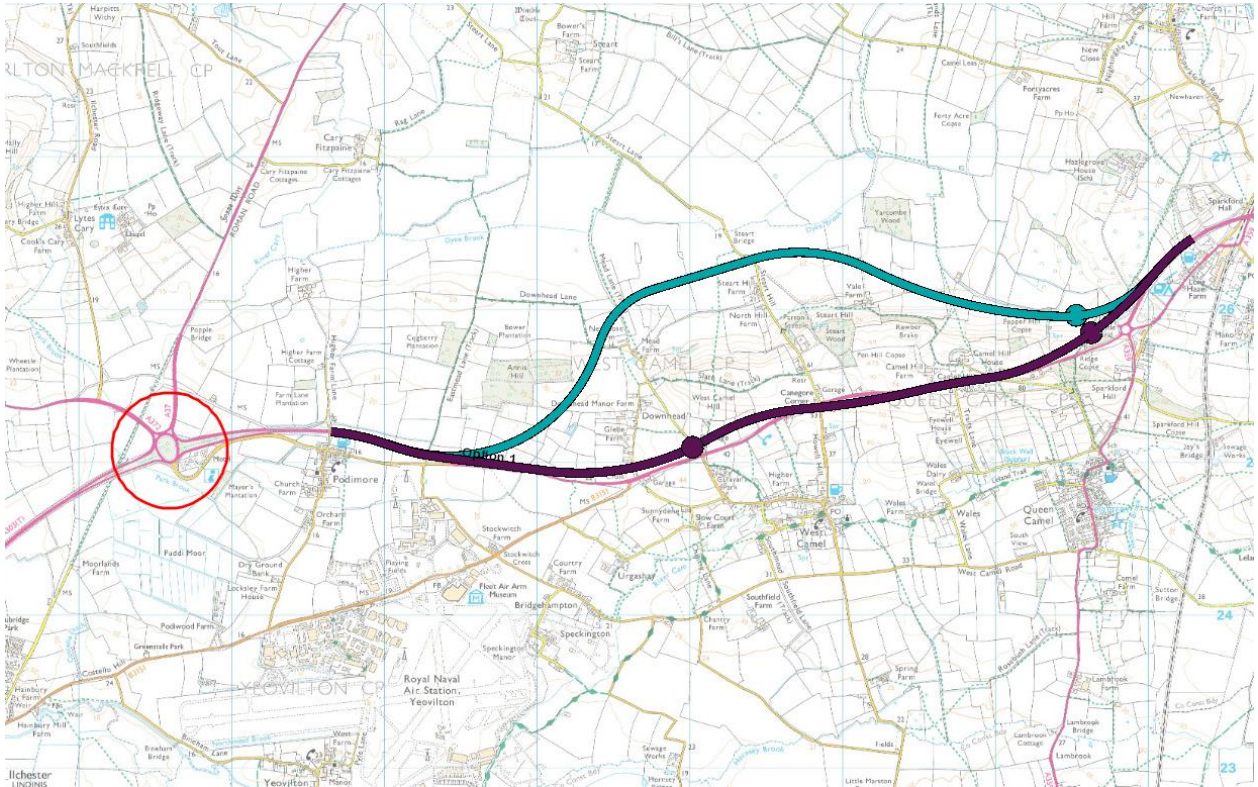


Figure 5.7: Sparkford Roundabout location

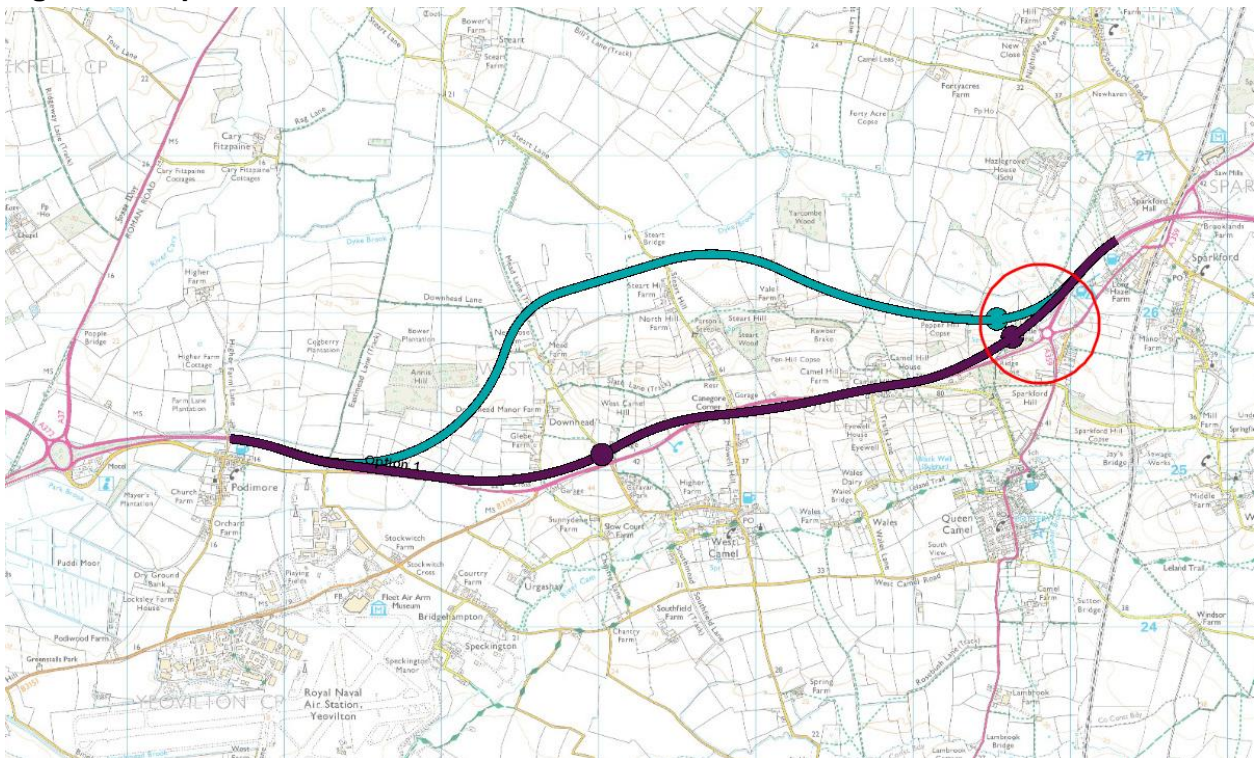




Figure 5.8: Map of Ilchester location

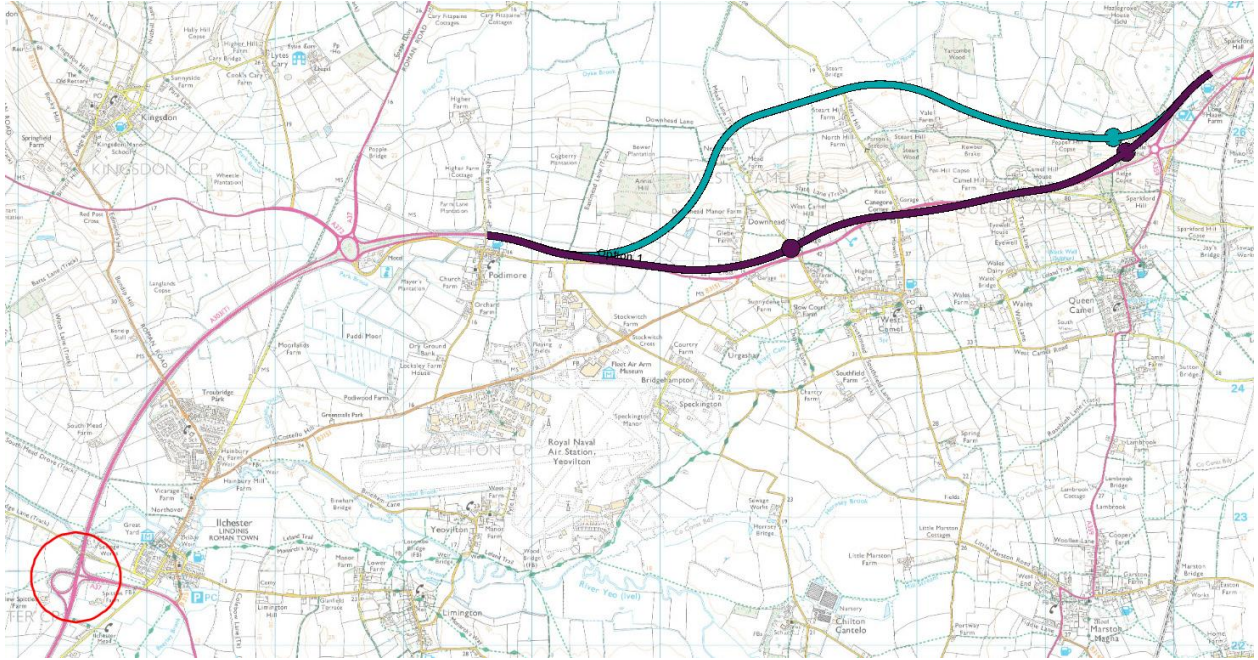
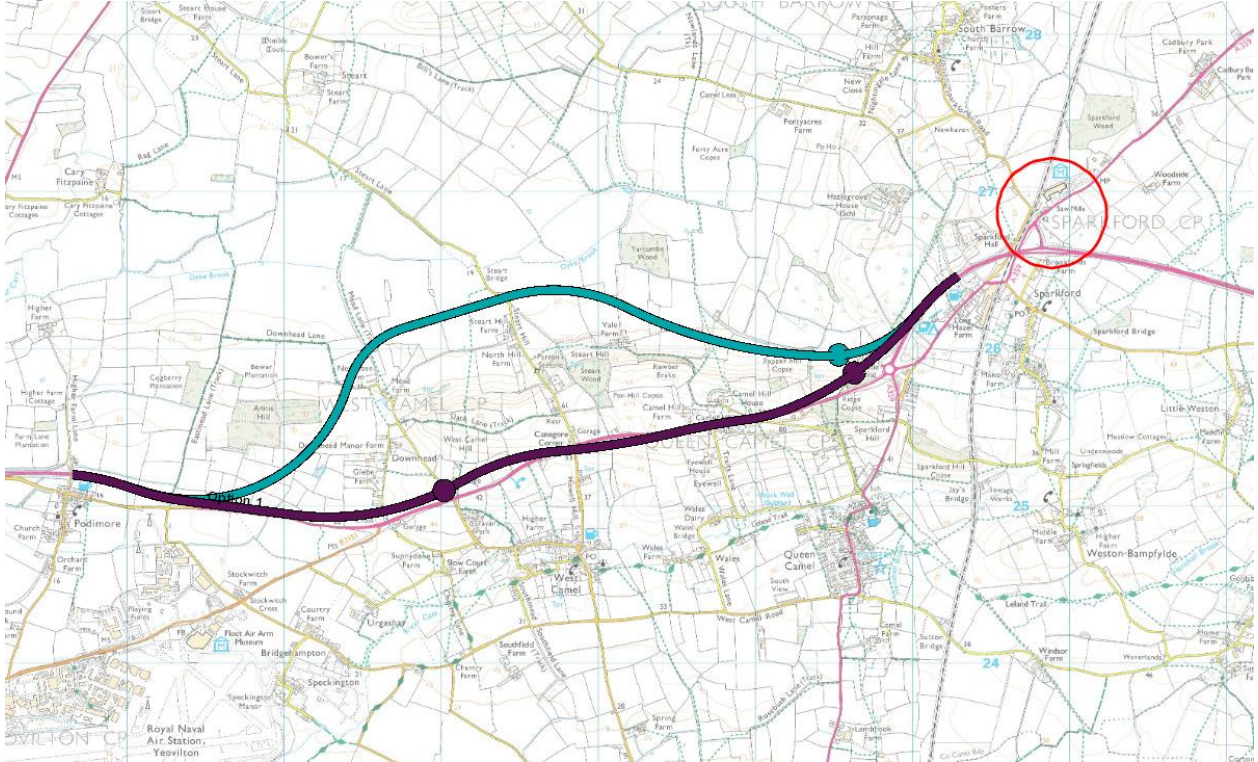
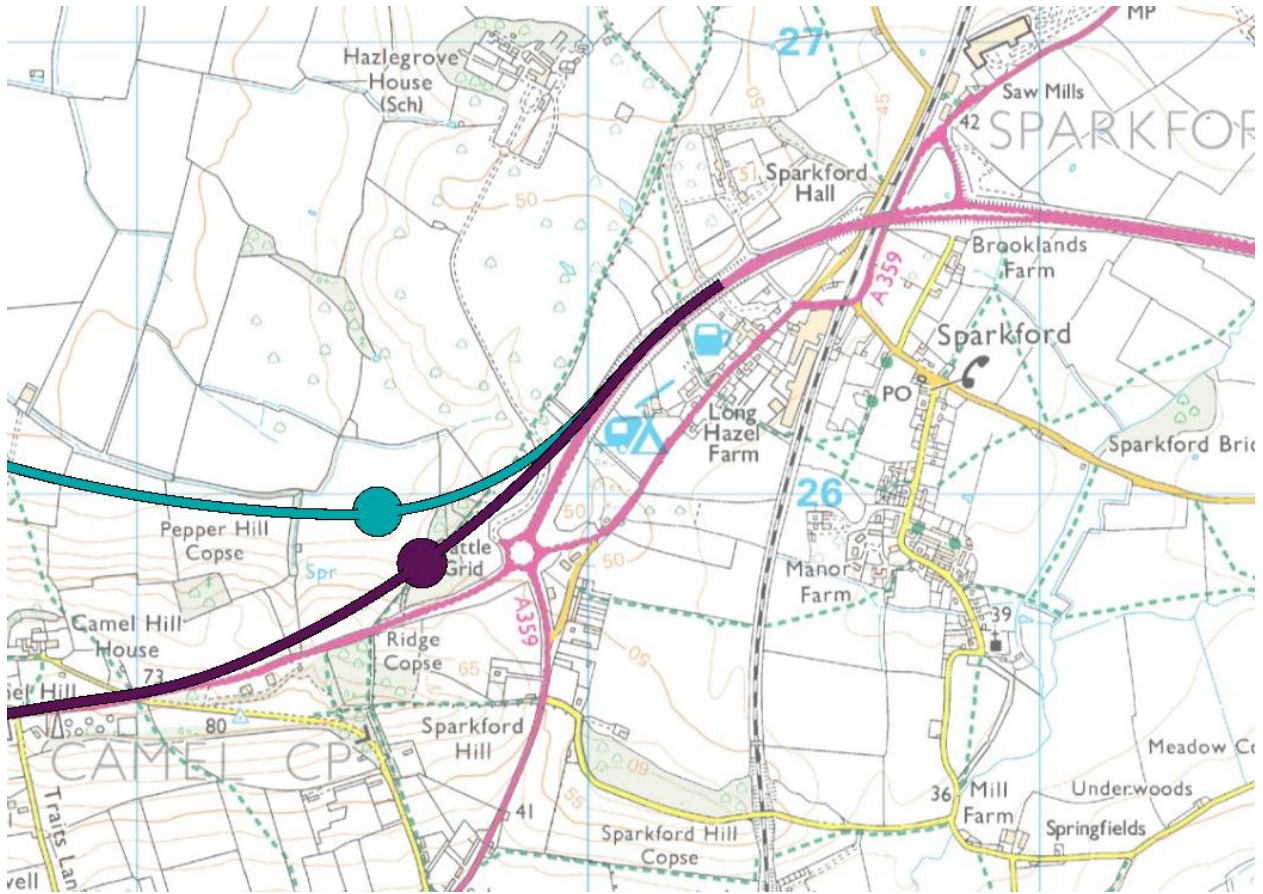


Figure 5.9: Map of Haynes Motor Museum location

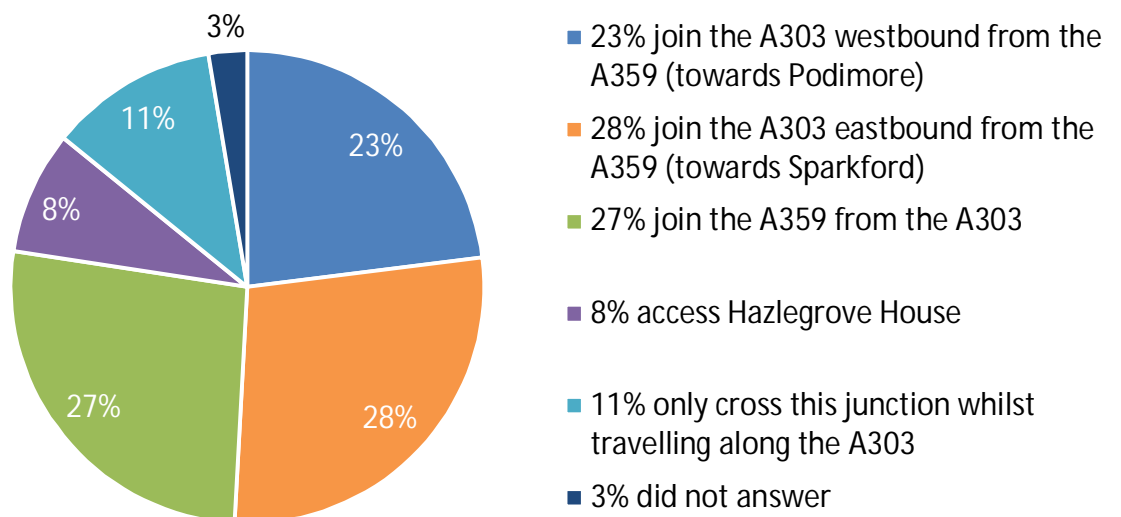


5.2.15. **Question 7 - Do you use Hazlegrove Roundabout for the following<sup>3</sup>?**

**Figure 5.10: Map of Hazlegrove Roundabout location**



**Figure 5.11: Use of Hazlegrove Roundabout**

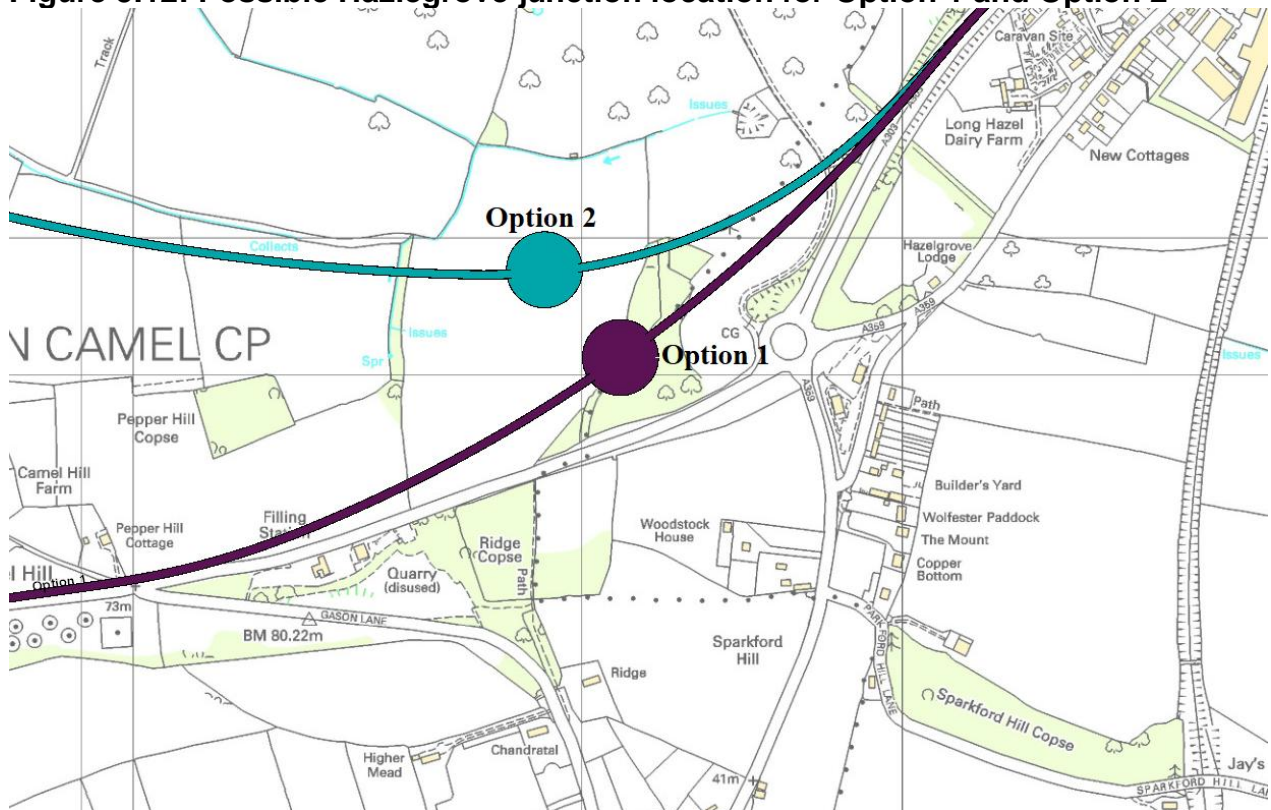


<sup>3</sup> There was a list of options to tick as represented in Figure 5.11

5.2.16. Figure 5.11 shows that Hazlegrove Roundabout is used for a wide variety of movements, with a relatively even split between traffic joining the A303 westbound or eastbound and the A359, reflecting its importance as a junction that serves strategic and local traffic needs.

5.2.17. **Question 8 - If the existing Hazlegrove junction did not connect to the improved A303; what route would you take to gain access to the road?**

**Figure 5.12: Possible Hazlegrove junction location for Option 1 and Option 2**



5.2.18. In addition to their movements at Hazlegrove, respondents were asked to identify a substitute route in the event that access was not maintained at Hazlegrove. The following is a list of the routes identified:

- Steart Hill
- Chapel Cross
- Cartgate Rounabout
- A37
- North Cadbury
- Sparkford
- A359
- Yeovil
- Haynes Motor Museum
- Podimore Roundabout
- West Camel
- South Cadbury
- Queen Camel

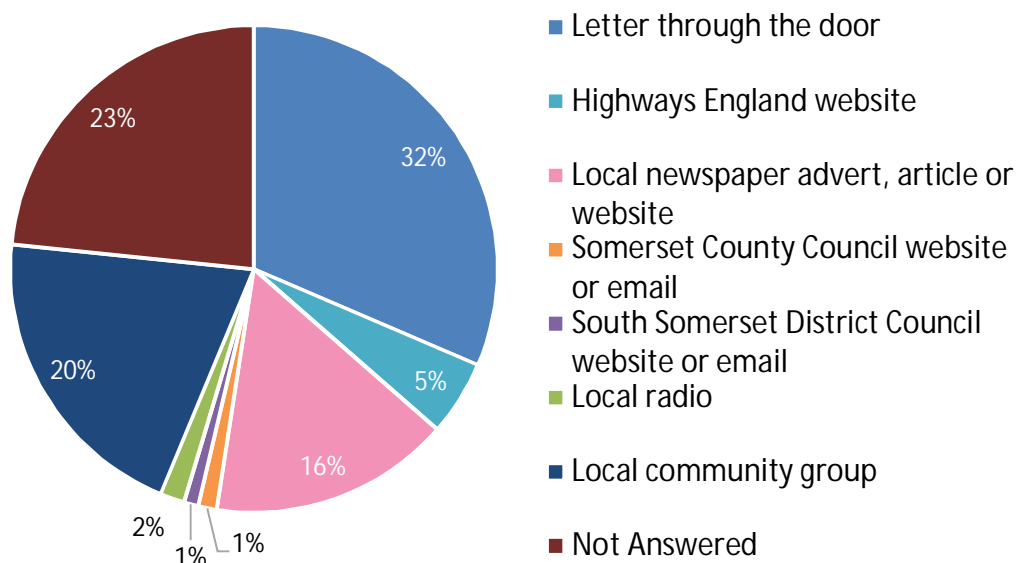
5.2.19. **Question 9 - Do you have any further comments or observations that you think we should consider?**

5.2.20. Highways England has analysed responses submitted by respondents to Question 9 and identified themes considered to be significant and common (see paragraph 5.1.3). All matters raised by respondents have been extracted and collated within the appropriate identified theme, and each has been considered and responded to by Highways England as set out in the Response Logs at Appendix C.

5.2.21. A number of consultation responses from local community organisations and statutory and non-statutory bodies were also received. These responses were analysed and the matters raised included in a separate Response Log also found in Appendix C.

5.2.22. **Question 10 – How did you find out about the A303 Sparkford to Ilchester improvement scheme consultation?**

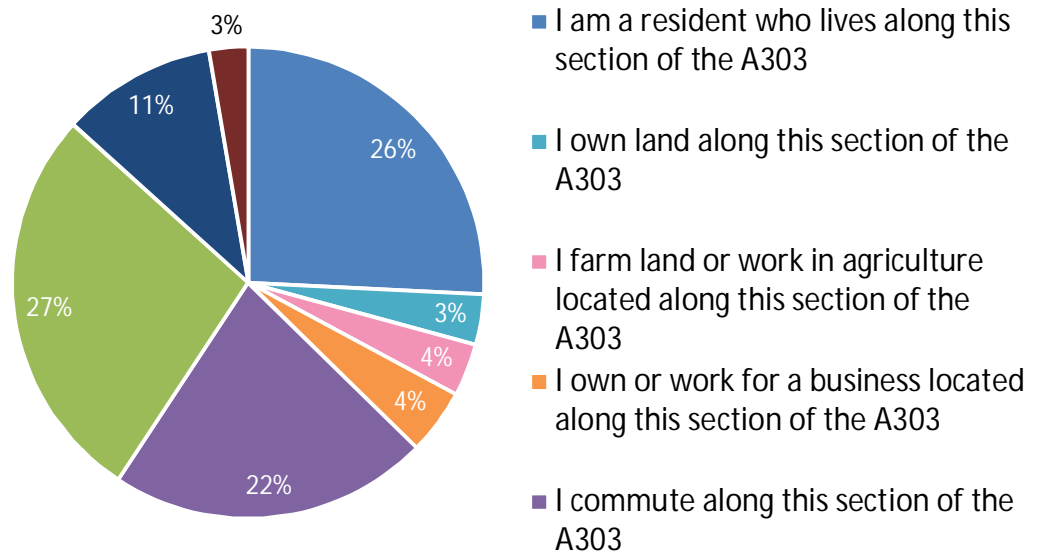
**Figure 5.13: Method of finding out about consultation**



5.2.23. Figure 5.13 displays the variety of ways in which respondents found out about the consultation. 32% found out about the consultation via a letter from Highways England, whilst a further 20% found out via a local community group. Local newspaper content in a variety of formats made up a further 16% and the Highways England website accounted for 5%. The remaining 4% who answered this question stated that they had found out via local radio (2%) or a local authority website (2% in total for South Somerset District Council and Somerset County Council)

5.2.24. **Question 11 – What is your interest in the scheme?**

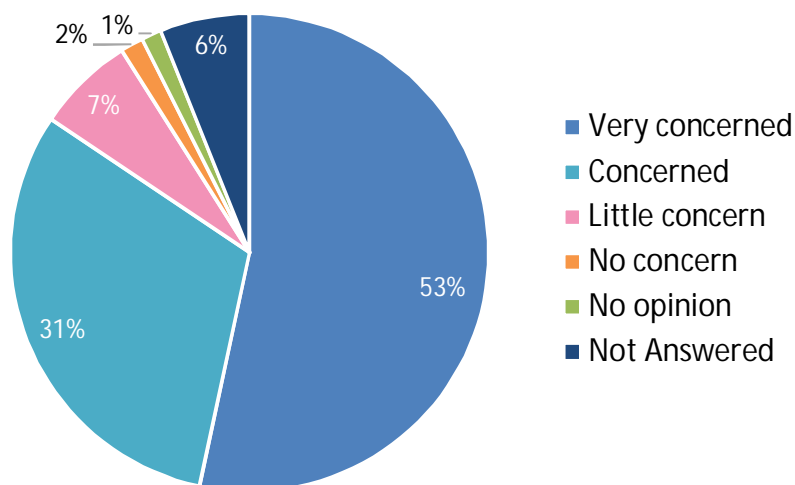
**Figure 5.14:** Interest in the scheme



5.2.25. Figure 5.14 shows that those with an interest in tourism and leisure make up the largest group of respondents, at 27%. These are closely followed by residents living along the route of the scheme at 26% and in turn by commuters using the route at 22%. The remaining 25% of respondents are made up of land owners, those who farm the land or work in agriculture, those who work in or own businesses along the route and various other users.

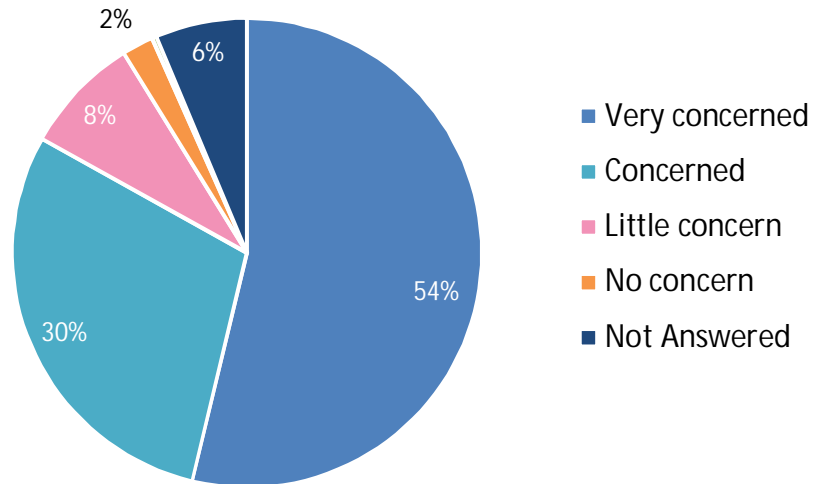
5.2.26. **Question 12 – Please tell us how concerned you are about the following issues**

**Figure 5.15:** Road Safety



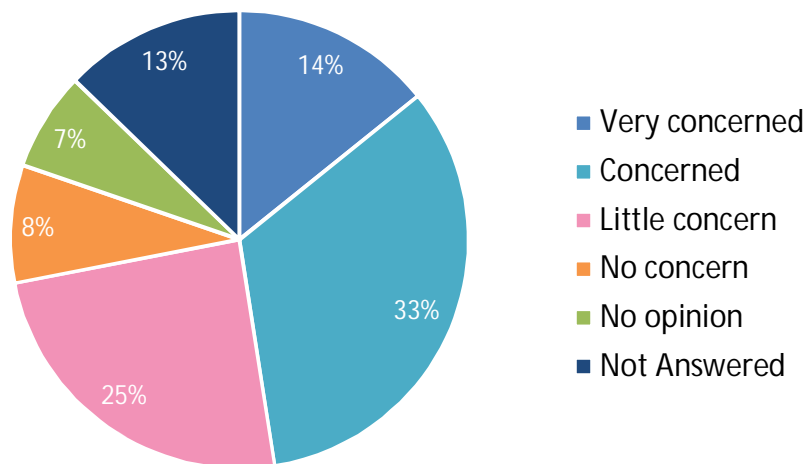
5.2.27. Figure 5.15 shows that 84% of respondents are either “concerned or “very concerned with road safety along this section of the A303. A further 7% of respondents indicated a “little concern” about road safety. just 2% of respondents have “no concern” over road safety.

**Figure 5.16: Traffic Congestion**



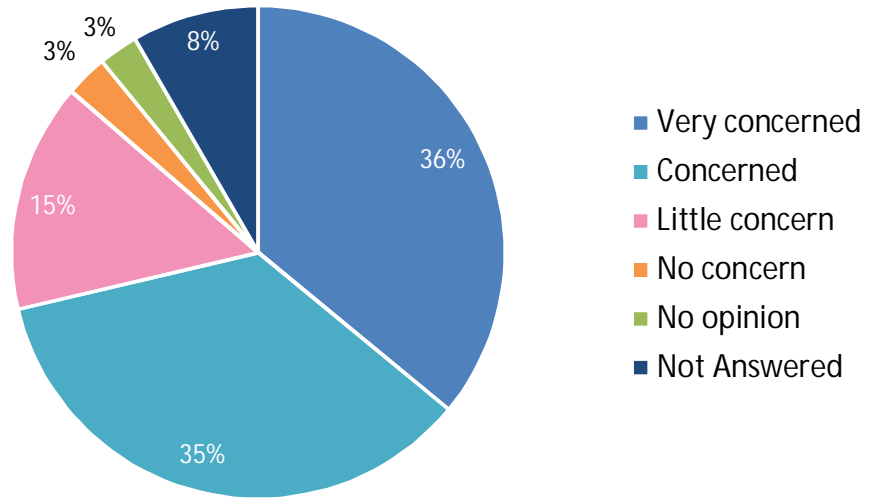
5.2.28. Figure 5.16 shows that 84% of respondents are either “very concerned” or “concerned” with the levels of traffic congestion along this section of the A303. By contrast, 8% indicate a “little concern” over traffic congestion. Only 2% of those who answered have “no concern” over the level of traffic congestion.

**Figure 5.17: Limited opportunities for economic growth**



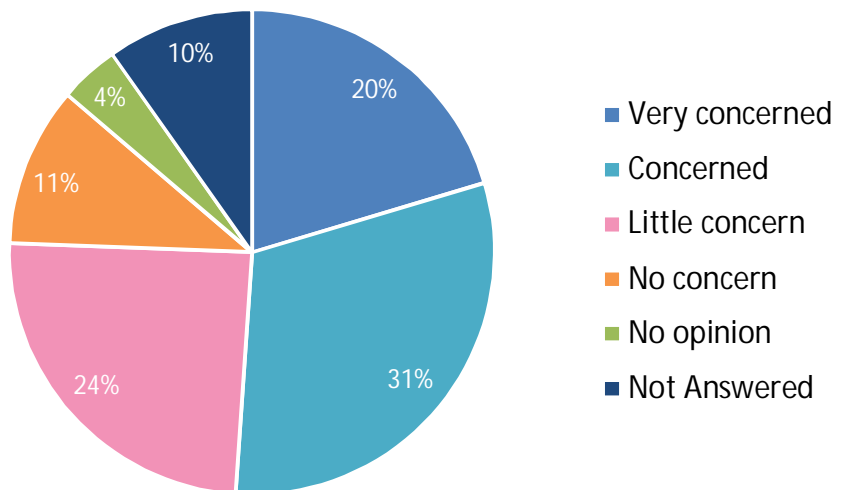
5.2.29. As displayed in Figure 5.17, 47% of respondents stated that they are “very concerned” or “concerned” about the existing situation on the A303 contributing to only limited opportunities for economic growth. An additional 25% of respondents have little concern over this. Only 8% of respondents have no concern over the limited lack of opportunities for economic growth which the existing route allows for.

**Figure 5.18: Air pollution**



5.2.30. Figure 5.18 shows that 71% of respondents are either “very concerned” or “concerned” about the levels of air pollution along the route of the section of the A303. A further 15% indicate a “little concern” over the levels of air pollution. The remaining 3% state that they have “no concern” over the levels of air pollution.

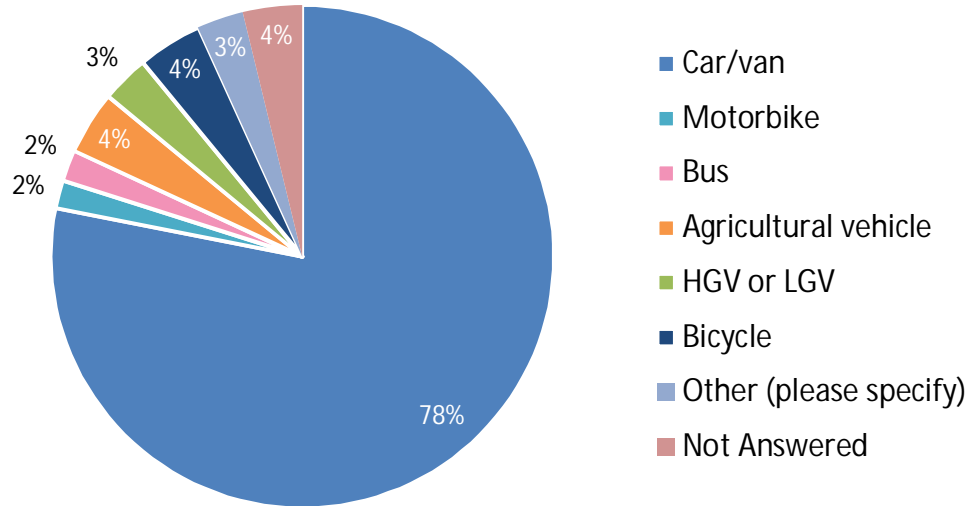
**Figure 5.19: Limited connectivity and access for pedestrians, cyclists and other non-motorised users**



5.2.31. Figure 5.19 shows that 51% of respondents are “very concerned” or “concerned” with the current state of limited connectivity for pedestrians, cyclists and other non-motorised users. 24% of respondents indicate a little concern over this issue, while 11% express no concern at all.

5.2.32. **Question 13 – How do you normally travel on the route?**

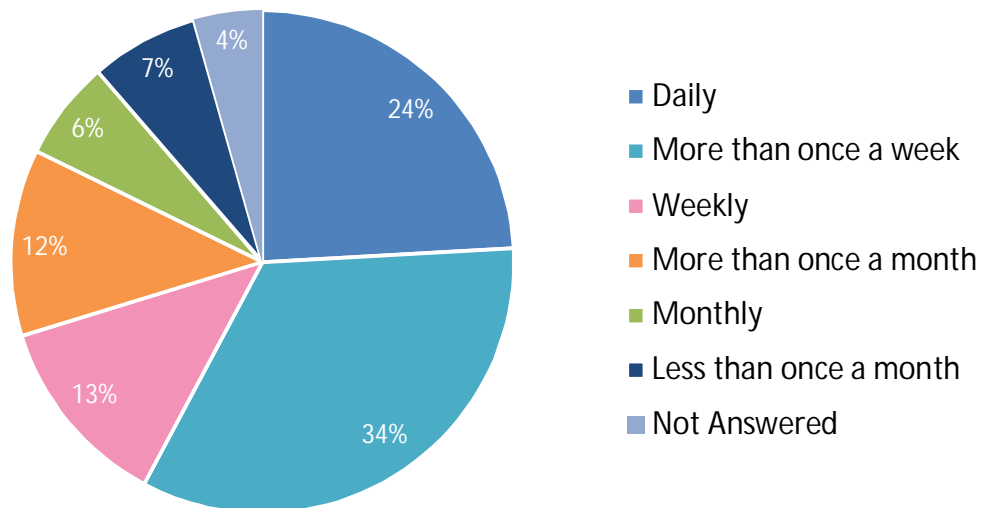
**Figure 5.20 – Travel on the route**



5.2.33. Figure 5.20 shows that 78% of respondents travel on the route using a car. The remaining 18% of those who answered are fragmented amongst a variety of different transport methods.

5.2.34. **Question 14 – How often do you use the route?**

**Figure 5.21: Use of the route - frequency**

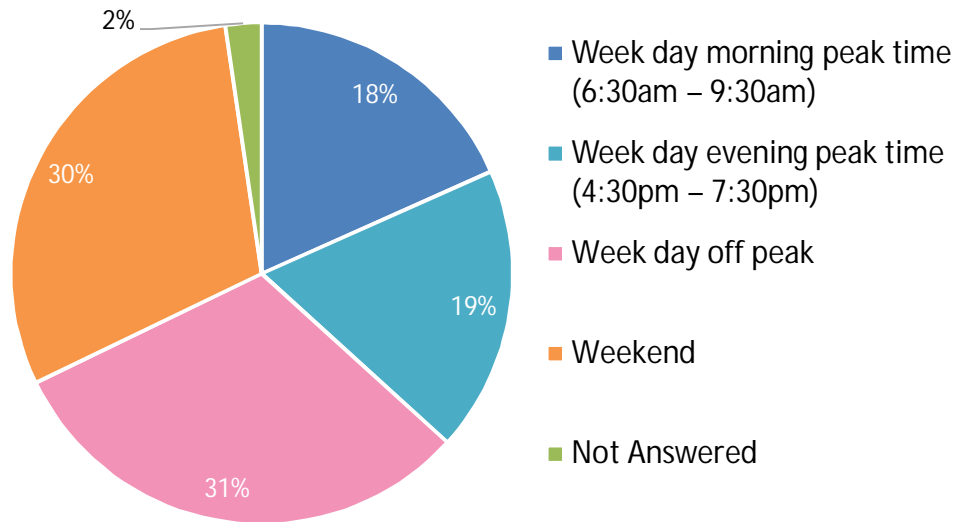


5.2.35. Figure 5.21 shows that 34% of respondents use the route more than once a week. This group is followed by people using the route daily (24%). The remaining 41% use the route weekly or less, with only 4% of respondents using it monthly.



5.2.36. **Question 15 – When do you use the route?**

**Figure 5.22: Use of the route – time/day**

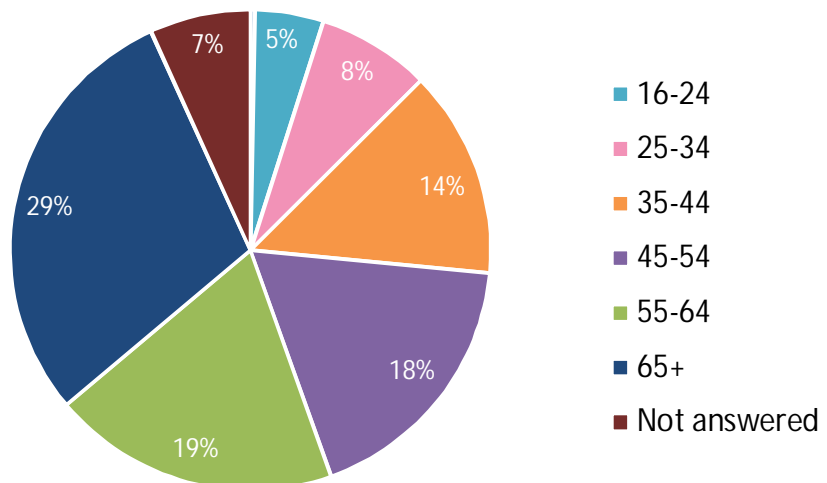


5.2.37. Figure 5.22 shows that there is a relatively even split amongst respondents between peak users (morning and evening users combined at 37%), off peak week day users (31%) and weekend users (30%).

5.2.38. **Question 16 & 17 - Diversity Questions**

5.2.39. In addition to the questions addressed above, the questionnaire asked a number of diversity questions. The results are shown in Figures 5.23 – 5.26 below.

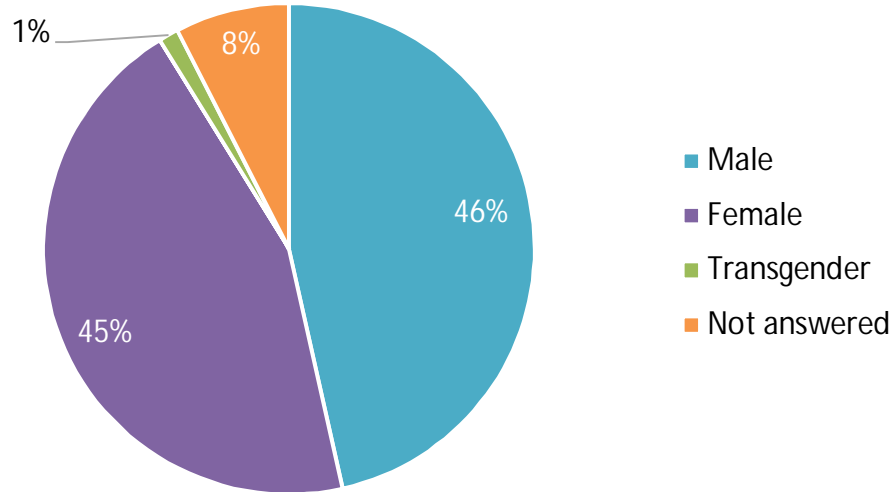
**Figure 5.23: Age breakdown**



5.2.40. Figure 5.23 shows that 29% of respondents stated that they were aged 65 or older while 13% stated that they were aged 34 or younger.

5.2.41. This bears reasonable correlation with the 2011 census which showed that 22% of the South Somerset population were aged 65 or over.

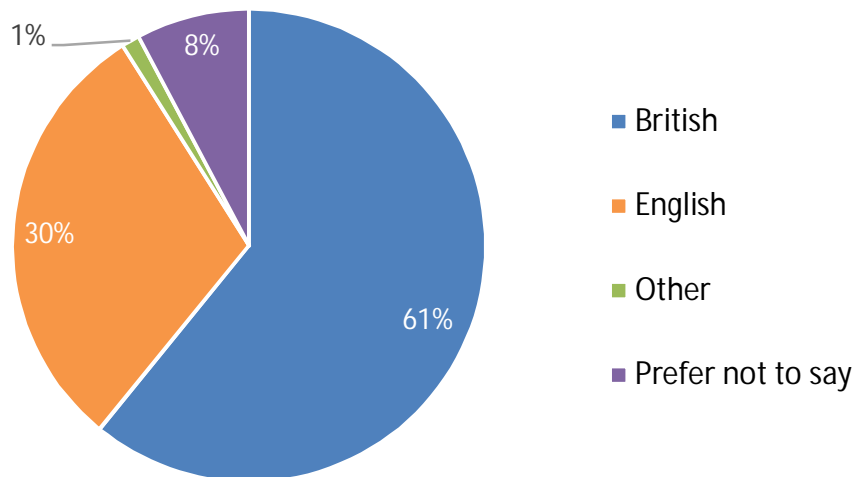
**Figure 5.24: Gender breakdown**



5.2.42. Evidence from the National Transport Survey (NTS)<sup>4</sup> suggests that women make more walking trips than men. As such, women are likely to be more sensitive to any changes to pedestrian access (during both construction and operation of the scheme) than other groups.

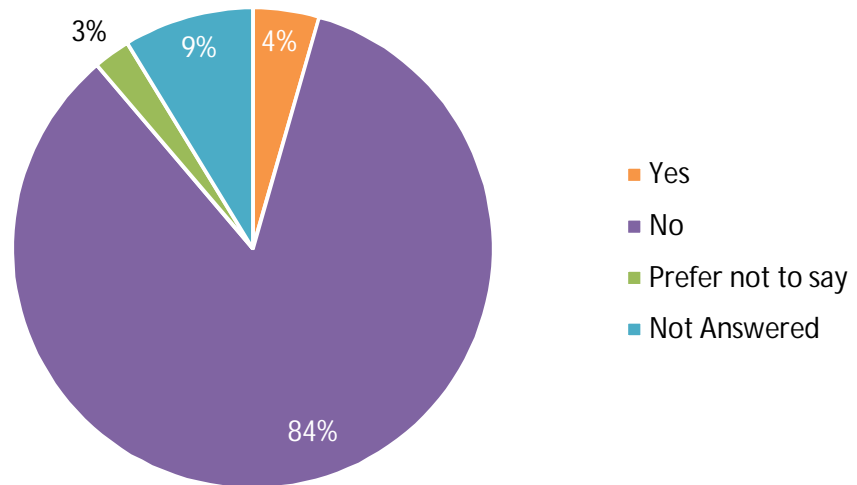
5.2.43. Figure 5.24 shows that responses were evenly split between genders. If women had not been adequately represented within the responses, important feedback may not have been received.

**Figure 5.25: National identity**



5.2.44. Figure 5.25:5 shows that the majority of people who responded consider themselves as British, with nearly a third identifying as English and with limited other international identities recorded.

<sup>4</sup> NTS (2015): 'National Travel Survey: England 2014', p.17. See: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/457752/nts2014-01.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/457752/nts2014-01.pdf)

**Figure 5.26: Do you consider yourself to have a disability?**

5.2.45. Figure 5.266 shows that the majority of people who responded do not consider themselves to have a disability.

### 5.3. Common concerns

- 5.3.1. Some of the main concerns raised from the consultation feedback are summarised below, with further comment in the Response Logs found in Appendix C.
- Flooding
  - Environmental impact
  - Non-motorised users
  - Scheme design and junction positioning for the local communities

#### Flooding

5.3.2. Many respondents identified that the local area suffers from flooding. Respondents living close to the A303 have stated that they believe the road currently contributes to flooding difficulties in nearby villages from water run-off. A number of local community respondents submitted photographs in addition to a questionnaire, bringing attention to flooding episodes in the local area, particularly at Steart Hill and Howell Hill.

5.3.3. These concerns are understood, and a detailed Flood Risk Assessment of the design proposals for the preferred route will be produced to ensure the scheme does not increase the susceptibility of the local area to flooding.

#### Environmental impact

5.3.4. Respondents highlighted a need to preserve the countryside, particularly the Sparkford Vale area that Option 2 would impact upon.

5.3.5. This concern has informed the choice of Option 1 as the preferred route. Also, as part of the ongoing environmental impact assessment process, the environmental design of the scheme will be central to developing a mitigation

and enhancement strategy. This will be fully developed to support the Development Consent Order (DCO) application. Further interim details will be presented at the next (statutory) consultation stage, and the full assessment will be reported in the Environmental Statement accompanying the DCO application.

### **Non-motorised users**

- 5.3.6. Many respondents identified the need to ensure connectivity for non-motorised users is maintained or improved.
- 5.3.7. Highways England intends to identify the most frequented walking, cycling and riding routes and investigate how these might be facilitated by safe and reliable crossings. This process has commenced by undertaking surveys of rights-of-way, consulting user groups including Somerset County Council's Rights-of-way Officer. Moving forward, Highways England will develop proposals for rights-of-way. This will include the provision of crossing points using bridges or underpasses to ensure people can cross the road in greater safety and more easily than they currently do. More details will be presented at the next consultation stage.

### **Scheme design and junction positioning for the local communities**

- 5.3.8. Many respondents commented that there is a need to ensure local connectivity between communities is retained as part of any proposal to improve this part of the A303.
- 5.3.9. Highways England now has a better understanding of how local residents and businesses use the road network and how these journeys need to be accommodated within the proposed scheme design. The information gained during the public consultation will now feed into the design for the preferred route, where junctions, bridges and underpasses need to be located.
- 5.3.10. There were many comments regarding Podimore Roundabout and the need for this junction to be upgraded in conjunction with this proposed A303 improvement. However, while the Podimore Roundabout is included in the programme of improvements for upgrading the A303/A358 corridor to an expressway, the upgrading of the roundabout has not been identified in the current 5-year Road Investment Strategy (RIS), and instead is due to be funded in future RIS periods.
- 5.3.11. Many respondents from the local community expressed how they thought the scheme was only catering for the needs of individuals wishing to travel from London to the South West peninsula and would create more traffic through their communities. Concerns were also expressed about local connectivity, with respondents wishing to ensure the new road does not cause rat-running through nearby villages.
- 5.3.12. This feedback will be used to optimise proposed junction designs, ensuring the scheme accommodates local traffic conveniently and safely whilst also catering for through traffic avoiding impacts on the local communities.

## 5.4. Summary of design suggestions from consultation feedback

5.4.1. A number of design suggestions have been identified from the consultation feedback. These have been taken into consideration when selecting the preferred route and will be considered further during the ongoing development of the scheme. They are shown in Table 5.1 below.

**Table 5.1 Summary of design suggestions from consultation**

Route Option	Respondent	Comment	Highways England Response
1 & 2	Public	Junction at Hazlegrove should be removed from the scheme.	This will be considered although the following should be noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial traffic analysis suggests that removal of this junction would significantly increase traffic through the village of Sparkford.</li> <li>Initial economic analysis suggests that this junction is essential for value for money.</li> <li>This comment is in contrast to other public feedback we have received stating that the junction is essential (see below).</li> </ul>
1 & 2	Public	Access to and from the new road at Hazlegrove should be included.	It was clear from the feedback during the consultation that the possible inclusion and subsequent arrangement of any junction at Hazlegrove is an important issue for many people. We have undertaken a number of traffic surveys along the existing A303, including Hazlegrove junction, in order to get a better understanding of how the traffic is currently moving around the junction. We also posed a specific question about Hazlegrove junction within the questionnaire. The data and feedback will help us develop a junction strategy which will be presented at the next consultation for further comment.
1 & 2	Somerset Ramblers	There should be no at-grade crossings of the new road.	At-grade pedestrian crossings on high speed roads are not desirable for safety reasons and will not be

Route Option	Respondent	Comment	Highways England Response
			proposed as part of the scheme design.
1	Public	Arrangements for access between the new route and Steart Hill should be improved.	We will examine the design in more detail, and in particular will look at local accesses and the access between the new route and Steart Hill.
1	Public	Access between the new road and RNAS Yeovilton is essential.	The access arrangements to RNAS Yeovilton are an important issue and we recognise the 'air-day' brings in large numbers of visitors. We have had several discussions with RNAS Yeovilton throughout the early stages of the design and will continue to maintain this dialogue to ensure their needs are addressed as best as possible.
1	Public	Traits Lane is not suitable for any additional use.	This will be considered during the next stage of development, particularly taking into account the requirements of residents to the north of the route for works to Traits Lane to benefit those residents.
1	Public	A safe crossing is required between Downhead and West Camel for school children.	Safe crossings for pedestrians, and other non-motorised users, including school children, will be looked at during the next stage. We will be in a position to talk about these crossings in more detail at the next consultation.
1	Public	The proposed junction at Downhead should be removed as it encourages rat-running through the villages of West Camel and Queen Camel.	This will be considered, noting also that this comment is in contrast to other public feedback we have received, stating that some form of access is required. We have also undertaken traffic counts to model and better understand this junction.
1	Public	Proposed works to Slate Lane are a poor idea and should be removed from the scheme.	We will examine the design in more detail, and in particular will look at local accesses including Slate Lane.
2	Public	A significant number of bridges would be	This will be considered during the next stage of development,

Route Option	Respondent	Comment	Highways England Response
		required across the new road to avoid impact to landholders either side.	particularly taking into account the specific requirements of individual landholders either side of the route.
2	West Camel Parish Council	Consider realigning Option 2 proposals to reflect initially the line shown in discarded Option B4 i.e. after leaving Podimore overbridge, the route should pass to the north of Annis Hill Wood, before re-joining the existing line of Option 2. This would provide greater separation from properties, Newclose & Mead Farms as well as other properties in Downhead.	Chapter 12 of the Technical Appraisal Report ( <a href="http://roads.highways.gov.uk/projects/a303-sparkford-to-ilchester">http://roads.highways.gov.uk/projects/a303-sparkford-to-ilchester</a> ) provides a summary of the comparison between Option B4 and Option 2 (named Option F1 at the time). This concluded that Option 2 offered better value for money than Option B4. A qualitative assessment of the environmental, social, safety, buildability and maintainability characteristics of each option concluded that there was little to distinguish between the two options. Option F1 was reported as being slightly worse in environmental terms due to potential impact on the Annis Hill Local Wildlife Site. However, on balance it was felt that the value for money benefits of Option 2 outweighed its marginal environmental dis-benefits. One reason why the impact at Annis Hill was discounted was because it was judged that further design modifications would reduce or even avoid the impact at Annis Hill. These concerns have subsequently informed the selection of Option 1 as the preferred route.

## 6. Conclusions and next steps

- 6.1.1. Highways England would like to thank all who have submitted consultation responses and contributed to the consultation. The feedback has provided valuable insight into the views of the local communities and others, and how Highways England can seek to refine the design of the preferred route.
- 6.1.2. The consultation has highlighted a variety of views about the scheme, many of which will be addressed during the next stage of the scheme development. It has been important to understand the possible impacts the scheme might have on the local community and where Highways England can make refinements to support the local community positively while still delivering the Government's Road Investment Strategy.
- 6.1.3. The consultation has also provided insight into specific aspects of the scheme. Above all, it is clear that there is good support for the principle of dualling the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester. Issues of connectivity are also considered paramount to enable local people to move around their local communities with ease.
- 6.1.4. Highways England has used the feedback received to help inform the choice of Option 1 for the preferred route. The feedback has been used alongside further assessment work undertaken since consultation, as reported in the Scheme Assessment Report (<http://roads.highways.gov.uk/projects/a303-sparkford-to-ilchester/>) to inform the choice.
- 6.1.5. Moving forward, Highways England will develop the preferred route and will engage with stakeholders in the design of its more detailed proposal. This engagement will include a statutory consultation to gain further feedback from all interested parties before the application is submitted for development consent.



## Glossary

Act	The Planning Act 2008
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
APFP Regulations	The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
DCLG guidance	'Planning Act 2008: Guidance on the pre-application process' (DCLG, March 2015)
DCO	Development Consent Order
DMRB	Design Manual for Roads and Bridges
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIA Regulations	The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009
ES	Environmental Statement
FRA	Flood Risk Assessment
GI	Ground Investigation
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle
NMU	Non-Motorised User
NRTS	National Roads Telecommunications Service
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
PEIR	Preliminary Environmental Information Report
PINS	Planning Inspectorate
PRoW	Public Right of Way
SAR	Scheme Assessment Report
SoCC	Statement of Community Consultation
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
TAR	Technical Appraisal Report
WFD	Water Framework Directive

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## **Appendix A – Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)**



Statement of Community Consultation

### **A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Road Dualling Route Options**

### **Non-Statutory Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)**

Date: 19 January 2017

Version: 0.9

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Section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 (the Act) requires promoters of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) to detail how they intend to comply with the consultation requirements set out in sections 42, 47 and 48 of the Act.

**The original format of this document is copyright to Highways England.  
A303 Sparkford to Ilchester road improvement scheme - Statement of Community Consultation**

Highways England is inviting feedback from the local community and road users on our proposals to improve the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester in South Somerset.

This non-statutory Statement of Community Consultation (the statement) provides background to the route options stage proposals and explains how a future Development Consent Order (DCO) application to improve the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester will progress.

The purpose of the statement is to set out how we will consult the local community and road users about the route options stage proposals.

The statement provides details of where further information can be obtained or viewed and how feedback by the local community and road users about the route options stage proposals can be provided to us.

**The options stage consultation**

We are developing this scheme under the Planning Act 2008 and this statement advises how we will consult with the local community and road users during the route options stage of the proposal to improve the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester.

The scheme is presently not at formal statutory consultation as required under Section 47 of the Act. Public feedback received during the non-statutory route options stage consultation will be recorded and carefully considered by Highways England when selecting a preferred route option, before a period of statutory consultation is commenced.

Under the Act, we are required to consult with the relevant local authorities. As part of the route options stage preparation, consultation has been undertaken with host local authorities and adjoining local authorities. Their views have been taken into account to develop the route options stage consultation approach and prepare this statement.

The Act requires us to submit an application to the Secretary of State through the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) for a DCO to build the scheme. The Secretary of State's role is to consider whether DCO approval should be given for major infrastructure projects like this scheme. We anticipate that a DCO application for the scheme will be published no later than summer 2018. The Secretary of State will consider the DCO application and decide on whether the scheme should go ahead.

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The Government has published National Policy Statements (NPS) relating to the types of infrastructure projects the Secretary of State will examine. These provide frameworks for DCO applications to be considered against. Major road infrastructure proposals are subject to the NPS for National Networks.

When Highways England submits its DCO application, the Secretary of State must consider whether consultation undertaken has been adequate. This non-statutory route options stage consultation will provide guidance that assists us to select a preferred route option.

Consultation with people living in the vicinity of a proposed development site is an important aspect of a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project proposal, and feedback received from the local community and road users during the route options stage consultation and pre-application consultation will help to deliver a better final scheme application.

A period of formal consultation, as required by Section 47 of the Act, is scheduled to take place in 2017. This will take place following selection of a preferred route option and before a DCO application is made to PINS.

More information about the PINS, the Act and how to participate in the DCO process can be found on the PINS national infrastructure planning website at <http://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/> or by calling PINS on 0303 444 5000.

At the time of publication of this statement, Highways England and other organisations within the vicinity of the options stage proposals were involved in the following road related public consultations:

- A358 Taunton to Southfields
- M5 Junction 25

### **The road improvement scheme**

The A303/A358 corridor is a vital connection between the South West and London and the South East. While the majority of the road has been dualled, there are still over 30 miles of single carriageway. These sections act as bottlenecks for users of the route resulting in congestion, particularly in the summer months and at weekends, delays to traffic travelling between the M3 and the South West and an increased risk of accidents.

The route corridor comprises multiple road standards, including single carriageways, single carriageways with overtaking lanes and dual carriageway sections with associated road junctions and varying speed limits between 40mph and 70mph.

The section of the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester includes the Hazlegrove Roundabout, which has five arms and forms a junction with the A359, including access to a service station located at the western end of the existing dual carriageway standard Sparkford bypass. Continuing westwards from the roundabout, the A303 comprises a single carriageway with a two-way overtaking lane that is subject to a 50mph maximum speed limit.

The remaining length of the Sparkford to Iichester section is characterised by single carriageway sections with double white lines prohibiting overtaking and subject to a 50mph maximum speed limit. There are a number of priority junctions along the route enabling access to the settlements of Queen Camel and West Camel to the south of the road, as well as a number of farm accesses and parking laybys. The road continues until it becomes a dual carriageway just before the Podimore Roundabout.

The section of the A303 between Sparkford and Iichester is approximately 3 miles in length.

The proposed scheme will link existing sections of dual carriageway and is likely to include new and replacement slip roads, junctions and road bridges to replace existing junctions and direct access roads.

#### Consulting the community

The consultation is a process by which the local community living in the vicinity of the A303 between Sparkford and Iichester and those that make use of the A303 road network between Sparkford and Iichester are invited to participate and provide feedback to the route options stage proposals.

Highways England wants to ensure that the local community and road users have the opportunity to understand the route options stage proposals and to provide feedback. To do this we will undertake a period of consultation from **15 February to 29 March 2017**, at which time we will ask for feedback on the route options stage proposals.

Consultation materials will detail information about the route options stage proposals, including route improvement alternatives, proposed road access arrangements, traffic modelling and the scheme timescales.

We will be using a range of methods during the consultation period to ensure that the local community, road users and any other interested party have an opportunity to view and provide feedback on the route options stage proposals.

The route options stage consultation will include the following consultation methodologies:

Method	Detail
<b>Public Information events</b>	<p>Public information events will be held at locations along the route of the scheme to offer people an opportunity to view the proposed route options, speak with the project team and provide feedback.</p> <p>The local community, businesses and road users will be informed of the events through channels including written communications, the Highways England website and local media.</p> <p>Information on how to provide consultation feedback will be available</p>

	<p>at the events and the Highways England website.</p> <p>A printed questionnaire will be available for members of the public to provide feedback and these can be left with the project team, posted free of charge to <b>Freepost Consultation, FPN 4016</b> or emailed to us.</p> <p>Information will be available to members of the public detailing how to provide feedback online at the Highways England website.</p>
<b>Public Information points</b>	<p>Information advertising the public information events will be on view at specified public information points.</p> <p>Consultation brochures will be available at public information points for the local community and other road users to review and take away.</p> <p>Information about how the local community, businesses and other road users can provide consultation feedback will be available at the public information points.</p> <p>A printed questionnaire will be available for members of the local community and other road users to provide feedback at the public information points and these can be posted free of charge or emailed to us.</p> <p>Information detailing how to provide feedback online at the Highways England website will be available.</p>
<b>Project website</b>	<p>Details of the scheme background, the need for the scheme and the proposed route options will be provided on the scheme web page at <a href="http://www.highways.gov.uk/Sparkford-to-Ilchester">www.highways.gov.uk/Sparkford-to-Ilchester</a></p> <p>Supporting route options stage documents including the consultation brochure will be available to download or print.</p> <p>A questionnaire will be available for members of the local community and other road users to provide feedback online.</p>
<b>Written communication</b>	<p>We will send residents and businesses inside the consultation zone (see Appendix 1.1) an information letter that explains the proposed route options and the issues being consulted on. The letters will invite people to the public information events and detail how consultation feedback can be provided to us.</p> <p>Other key stakeholder organisations and special interest groups will also receive information letters that explain the route options stage proposals and the issues being consulted on. The letters will invite recipients to the public information events and detail how consultation feedback can be provided to us.</p>

	<p>Individuals or organisations that have registered to receive further communications on the Highways England scheme web page will be sent information emails that explain the proposed route options and the issues being consulted on. The emails will invite recipients to the public information events and detail how consultation feedback can be provided to us.</p> <p>Details of public information events:</p>
<b>Consultation brochure</b>	<p>We will produce a consultation brochure providing information about the route options stage proposals, the need for the scheme and the issues being consulted on. The brochure will be available to view on the Highways England scheme web page.</p> <p>The consultation brochure will also be available at public information events and public information points.</p> <p>Copies of the consultation brochure can be provided free of charge by request to Highways England.</p>
<b>Use of local authority and parish council communications channels</b>	<p>We will promote the route options stage consultation through local authority and parish council communication channels, including their respective websites, newsletters and social media pages.</p>
<b>Representatives at local groups and forums</b>	<p>We welcome contact from local groups and forums. Where it is considered that there is a relevant interest and where a visit is considered proportionate and appropriate, we will attend a local event to discuss the route options stage consultation.</p>
<b>Hard to reach groups</b>	<p>An appropriate and proportionate 'hard to reach' engagement plan will be developed with the assistance and agreement of relevant local authority personnel and third sector organisations.</p> <p>Appropriate and proportionate consultation tools for hard to reach groups could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentations to community groups and organisations</li> <li>• Appropriate direct engagement with, for example, younger people and disabled people and representative groups</li> <li>• Provision of appropriate and accessible materials in local community/hard to reach centres</li> <li>• Provision of appropriate and accessible materials (i.e. in large print and alternative languages if requested)</li> <li>• Venues chosen for public events to be compliant with the Equality Act 2010</li> </ul>
<b>Route options stage consultation</b>	<p>The local community and other road users will be updated about progress of the route options stage consultation through channels including written communications, the Highways England website,</p>

<b>updates</b>	local media and local authority websites, newsletters and social media.
<b>Consultation feedback</b>	Written feedback can be made either online or in writing to Highways England at the following addresses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="mailto:A303SparkfordtoIichesterDualling@highwaysengland.co.uk">A303SparkfordtoIichesterDualling@highwaysengland.co.uk</a></li> <li>• A303 Sparkford to Iichester Dualling, 2/07K Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6HA</li> </ul>
<b>Media</b>	The route options stage consultation will be publicised through local print, radio and online media channels by means of a Highways England press release detailing the consultation process and explaining how the local community and road users can provide feedback.

#### Documents available for inspection

Scheme summary information and copies of the consultation material will be available online and will be updated throughout the course of the scheme at the Highways England scheme web page.

#### Next steps

Feedback provided by members of the local community and road users during the route options stage consultation will be recorded by Highways England.

Please contact Highways England to find out more about this scheme by:

- visiting the scheme webpage at [www.highways.gov.uk/Sparkford-to-Iichester](http://www.highways.gov.uk/Sparkford-to-Iichester)
- emailing the project team at [A303SparkfordtoIichesterDualling@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:A303SparkfordtoIichesterDualling@highwaysengland.co.uk)
- calling the project team on 0300 123 5000 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)
- writing to the project team at A303 Sparkford to Iichester Dualling, 2/07K Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6HA

#### Consultation zone

The consultation zone covers a geographical area of approximately 1.5 kilometres from any point on all of the proposed route options under consultation. In certain areas the 1.5 kilometre zone has been extended to include additional population centres. A map showing the consultation zone boundary is in appendix 1.1.

#### Local authorities consulted

Host local authorities: (Somerset County Council, South Somerset District Council)



Adjoining local authorities: (Bath and North East Somerset Council, Devon County Council, Dorset County Council, East Devon District Council, Mendip District Council, North Dorset District Council, North Somerset Council, Sedgemoor District Council, Taunton Deane Borough Council, West Dorset District Council, Wiltshire Council)

**Public information event venues, dates and times**

A minimum of three public events will be held during the consultation period. These events will be located at strategic locations along the proposed route options. The venues will be chosen based on the suitability of the building, ease of access for all members of the local community, and available facilities.

The public events will be open from late morning until the early evening, with at least one event held at the weekend.

Date	Location	Time
Thursday 23 February 2017	Sparkford Inn, High Street, Sparkford, Yeovil, BA22 7JH	12.00 midday to 5.00pm
Saturday 25 February 2017	Queen Camel Memorial Hall, High Street, Queen Camel, Yeovil, BA22 7NF	10.00am to 5.00pm
Friday 10 March 2017	Davis Hall, Howell Hill, West Camel, Yeovil, BA22 7QX	10.00am to 5.00pm

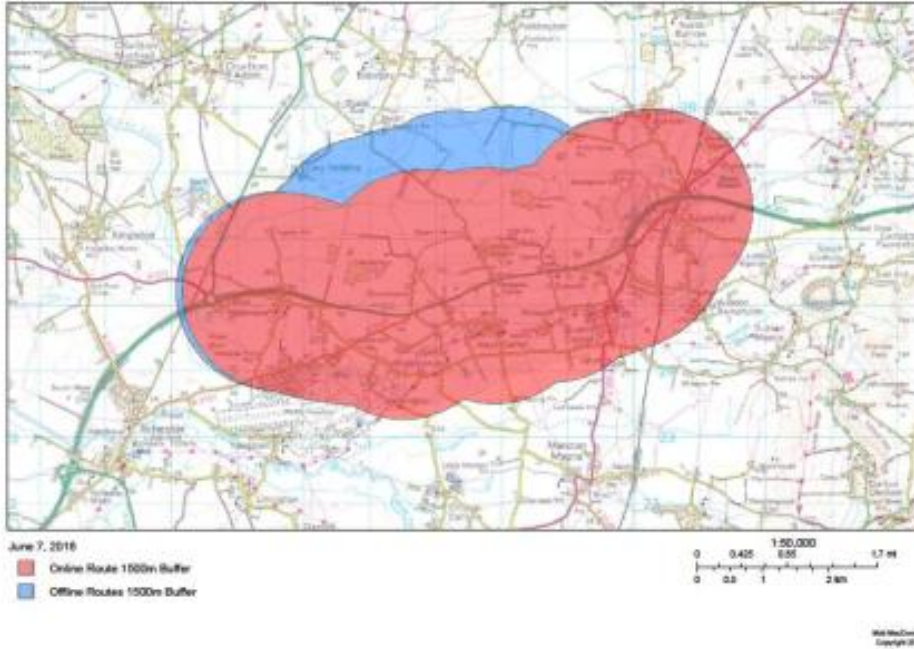
**Public information point locations**

Consultation materials will be available to view at a number of venues and beyond the consultation zone. Materials available for viewing at these locations will include the consultation brochure and questionnaire for the proposed route options. Visitors will be able to take a copy of the consultation brochure and questionnaire away with them. All other materials will be available to view on the Highways England website - [www.highways.gov.uk/Sparkford-to-lchester](http://www.highways.gov.uk/Sparkford-to-lchester).

Public Information Points	
Wincanton Library, 7 Carrington Way, Wincanton, Somerset, BA9 8JS	Barrington Court, Barrington, Ilminster, TA19 0NQ
Yeovil Library, King George Street, Yeovil, Somerset, BA20 1PZ	Lytes Cary Manor, near Somerton, Somerset, TA11 7HU
South Petherton Library, St. James Street, South Petherton, Somerset, TA13 0BS	Montacute House, Montacute, TA15 6XP
Taunton Library, Paul Street, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 3XZ	Somerset County Council, County Hall, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 4DY
Martock Library, The Shopping Centre, Martock, Somerset, TA12 6DL	South Somerset District Council, Brympton Way, Yeovil, Somerset, BA20 2HT

Appendix 1.1 – Consultation zone map

Apollo GIS Viewer



## Appendix B – Organisations invited to respond to the consultation

Organisation
Access for All
Associated British Ports
Avon and Somerset Constabulary
Bab Cary Parish Council
Bath & North East Somerset Council
Blackdown Hills AONB Conservation Board
British Gas
British Gas c/o ES Pipelines
British Gas Pipelines limited
British Horse Society
BT / BT Openreach
Cable and Wireless - Vodafone UK
Civil Aviation Authority
DEFRA
Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters
Devon County Council
Dorset CCG
Dorset County Council
Dorset Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters
Dorset LEP
Dorset Police
East Devon District Council
Easynet
EDF Energy
Energetics Electricity Limited
Energetics Gas Ltd
English Heritage
Environment Agency
EON UK
Equality Steering Group
ES Pipelines Ltd
Forestry Commission
Fulcrum Pipelines Ltd
Gas Transportation Company (GTC)
Heart of South West LEP
Historic England
Instalcom
Interoute (Ringway/Beach/51 degrees)
Joint Nature Conservation Committee
Line Search Before U Dig
LNG Portable Pipeline Services Limited

Local Transport Body
McNicholas
Mendip District Council
Musgrove Park Hospital
National Farmers Union (NFU)
National Grid Electricity Transmission Plc
National Grid Gas Plc
National Parks Authorities
National Trust
NATS En-Route (NERL) Safeguarding
Natural England
NHS Northern Eastern and Western Devon Clinical Commissioning Group
North Dorset District Council
North Somerset Council
Oli and Pipelines Agency
Orange / EE
Passenger Transport Executives (PTEs)
Public Health England
Queen Camel Parish Council
Railway Heritage Trust
Ramblers Association
Redstone Managed Solutions
RNAS Yeovilton
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
Scotia Gas Network
Secretary of State for Defence
Sedgemoor District Council
Serco Group plc
Somerset CCG
Somerset County Council
Somerset Drainage Boards Consortium
Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board
Somerset Partnership NHS Trust
Somerset Wildlife Trust
South Somerset District Council
South Somerset Together (SST)
South West England - The Forestry Commission
South West Heritage Trust
South West Tourism Alliance
South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust
Sparkford Parish Council
SSE
SSE Pipelines
Sustrans

Swindon & Wiltshire LEP
Taunton Deane Borough Council
The British Waterways Board - Canal and River Trust (Kennet and Avon Waterways)
The Coal Authority
The Crown Estate Commissioners
The Joint Nature Conservation Committee - Headquarters
The Marine Management Organisation
The Maritime and Coastguard Agency - Head Office
The National Grid
The Office for Nuclear Regulation
Traffic Master
Trinity House Maritime Navigation
UK Hydrographic
UK Power Networks (IDNO)
UK Power Networks Limited
Verizon UK Limited
Virgin Media
West Camel Parish Council
West Dorset District Council
West of England LEP
West Somerset District Council
Western Power Distribution
Wiltshire Council
Yeovil Hospital
Yeovilton Parish Council

## Appendix C – Response Logs

PUBLIC CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSE LOG		
Theme: Scheme Junctions		
Theme Area	Public Feedback	Highways England Response
Design	To improve traffic flow we need flyovers at Hazlegrove, Podimore and Cartgate roundabouts.	The scheme proposals include grade-separation of traffic movements at Hazlegrove Roundabout. The scheme extent does not include Podimore or Cartgate roundabouts which would be subject of proposals in the future road investment periods to achieve the long-term commitment to creating a new Expressway to the South West.
Downhead and Howell Hill	Having seen the proposed plans at the roadshow in West Camel a few days ago, I am somewhat concerned that Option 1 has the location of a potential junction on the new A303 between Podimore & Hazlegrove. Whilst I accept that access to RNAS Yeovilton has to be considered, this must not be to the detriment of West Camel and other villages. On the map, it showed a potential new junction located between the Downhead and Howell Hill junctions. This will cause traffic to 'rat run' through West Camel to head south towards Sherborne. Bearing in mind that we are told that there will be no link between Plowage Lane and Howell Hill on the existing A303, this will mean that traffic will be forced to use Plowage Lane, Keep Street, Fore Street and travel through the	Option 1 has been selected as the preferred route. These comments are noted and will be considered during the development of the next stage of the scheme's design.

	centre of the village. This is a route that, in part, is single carriageway with no footpath and is prone to flooding up to 3 feet deep and has a narrow bridge with a weight limit on it - not a wise choice. The route exiting the village, southbound, would take this traffic to our infamous crossroad, a location already famed for the number of accidents.	
Downhead Junction	Can the existing carriageway not be widened to dual carriageway, making Downhead right turn only?	The existing carriageway has been assessed to determine if it could be widened by constructing two additional lanes alongside. It has been determined that the alignment of the existing carriageway is not of a sufficient safe standard to enable this. However the route of Option 1, now selected as the preferred route, closely follows the existing road, making use of the existing corridor as much as possible but enabling the development of a safe, 70mph alignment and avoiding adjacent property as much as possible.
Hazlegrove roundabout	Access to the new road should be provided at Hazlegrove.	This comment is noted and will be considered during the development of the junction and local road designs for Option 1, the preferred route.
Hazlegrove roundabout	For residents in Sparkford, South Barrow, North Barrow and surrounding villages access to A303 at Hazlegrove is important; removing this would increase traffic on smaller roads getting to alternative access points and increase journey times. This could have a major impact on those who use the A303 for longer commutes and make smaller roads more dangerous if usage is increased.	This comment is noted and will be considered during the development of the junction and local road designs for Option 1, the preferred route.

Hazlegrove roundabout	A flyover at Hazlegrove roundabout? A 60mph speed limit - keep the current Hazlegrove junction. It is not the "give way" onto the roundabout that causes the problem of traffic backlog, it is the subsequent two-way road (Hazlegrove to Podimore) with the bottleneck effect. Roundabouts on dual carriageways still work efficiently – e.g. other sections of the A303.	This scheme has been identified in the Government's Road Investment Strategy, which commits to creating a dual-carriageway Expressway to the South West via the M5 at Taunton. Expressway junctions will be largely grade-separated. The new dual carriageway is likely to be subject to the national 70mph speed limit for that type of road. Grade-separated junctions comprise a continuous dual carriageway through the junction, with entry and exit slip roads which facilitate the safe and convenient movement of traffic between the new dual carriageway and the local road network.
Hazlegrove roundabout	The existing junction at Hazlegrove is extremely hazardous - the majority of cars do not slow enough from the Wincanton exit and cross the roundabout towards Ilchester at still high speed, with little or no indication as the natural exit looks like the A359 towards Yeovil. I hope this can be vastly improved in line with the dualling/upgrade.	Option 1 has been selected as the preferred route and plans to improve the Hazlegrove junction will be included as part of ongoing development of the scheme.
Junctions	I believe the current plan with Option 1 is to have a large, complicated junction just to the north of West Camel, and to close the Downhead junction altogether. This would also involve making a road up over the hill destroying what is currently a bridle way known as Slate Lane. This seems ridiculous.	Option 1 has now been selected as a preferred route. The comments regarding the Downhead Lane Junction and Slate Lane are noted and will be taken into consideration during the next stage of scheme development.
Junctions	I cannot believe there would be no Sparkford junction with the new A303	It is proposed that there will be a grade-separated junction at Hazlegrove, which will accommodate access to Sparkford. Further details will be provided at the next consultation stage.



Junctions	Junction layouts need to discourage rat running, in particular HGVs.	Highways England is committed to creating a network that works for adjacent communities as well as longer distance traffic. The aim of avoiding rat-running through adjacent communities will be to the fore in the development of the scheme proposals.
Local connectivity	We are also concerned that people with no connection to the village might override the interests of the local populations of Queen Camel, West Camel, Wales, Urgashay and Bridgehampton.	This concern is extremely pertinent and one of the reasons why Highways England undertakes Public Consultation early in the development of the scheme. The concern will be taken into account as part of the ongoing scheme development and the design proposals presented at the next consultation stage.
Local traffic	Need to consider alternative future provision for cyclists and agricultural vehicles to enable the route to be of expressway standard.	Walking, cycling and riding routes will be facilitated by safe and reliable crossings of the expressway. The safe movement of agricultural vehicles will also be accommodated. Associated proposals for rights-of-way enhancements and agricultural movements will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Podimore roundabout	Various comments expressing frustration that the scheme does not expressly deal with the problem of the Podimore roundabout which is central in the route being considered.	An upgrade of the Podimore Roundabout is part of the Government's planned programme of improvements, contained in its Road Investment Strategy, for upgrading the A303/A358 corridor to a dual carriageway expressway. However it is not part of this scheme; instead it is due to be brought forward in future road investment periods.
Queen Camel Bottleneck	The bottleneck at Queen Camel (A359) should also be looked at	This comment raises an issue that is outside the scope of this project. The A359 through Queen Camel is part of Somerset County Council's road network.
Stear Hill access	Access to and across the A303 at present is less than satisfactory from Steart Hill by reason of it being necessary to cross two opposite direction lanes of traffic that are often busy. Were the scheme to provide for some easier access and egress, that would be welcome.	This comment is noted and will be considered during the next stage of the preferred route's development.

Theme: Buildability and Construction		
Theme Area	Public Response	Highways England Summary
Buildability	Option 2 is more likely to be built to good design standards, unlike Option 1 which will most likely be riddled with relaxations and departures from standard to "make it fit".	The relative merits of Options 1 and 2 have been carefully weighed as set out in the Scheme Assessment Report, with Option 1 having been chosen as the preferred route. Option 1 can be and will be designed to safe expressway standards. This will be demonstrated when the design proposals are presented at the next consultation stage.
Buildability	Option 2 - Easier to construct as away from the existing A303 - only requires joining at each end. Trying to construct a new road along much of the old A303 would lead to traffic chaos and congestion on local roads as and when the A303 would need to be closed. The old A303 would become a useful local road / amenity with the new road taking all the through traffic away farther to the north.	When selecting the preferred route, a number of factors are weighed, including the scheme objectives, benefits, safety, costs, environmental effects, construction and impacts on local communities. From weighing the relative merits of Options 1 and 2, Option 1 has emerged as the preferred route. A construction management plan will be developed in liaison with Somerset County Council to ensure that construction impacts are minimised. The existing A303 will be kept open throughout construction, for traffic to be kept moving with minimum disruption. Associated details will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Construction	How would traffic be kept moving during construction? our side roads are not suitable for diversions involving HGV's.	A traffic management plan will be produced to minimise the impact of construction on road users and local journeys during construction. The local highway authority and emergency services will be involved, with the agreed associated measures being designed and controlled to avoid traffic (including HGVs) being diverted to unsuitable local roads. More detail will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Ease of construction	Option 2 - Quicker and less expensive. Downhead will be reconnected in a much less isolated way. Reduce construction time and reduce inconvenience during the construction. Is it quicker and less expensive?	Relative costs and ease of construction have been taken into consideration in the comparative assessments of Options 1 & 2, as set out in the Scheme Assessment Report. With Option 1 having been chosen as the preferred route, the accompanying scheme design will secure the existing A303 remaining in use to serve local traffic. Details will be presented at the next consultation stage.

<b>Theme: Highways Design</b>		
<b>Theme Area</b>	<b>Public Response</b>	<b>Highways England Summary</b>
Bridges and underpasses	Where will bridges and underpasses be? It wasn't clear from the consultation. Detail will be refined at later design stages.	The purpose of the consultation was to inform the public about the scheme at an early stage of its development and to obtain feedback that could help to inform the choice of preferred route. Now that Option 1 has been chosen as a preferred route, the design of the scheme will be progressed to clarify the design proposals for features including bridges and any underpasses, and the associated details will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Congestion	Only occurs on Friday and Saturday evenings in the summer due to London and SW holiday traffic.	Peak traffic levels along the A303 at West Camel are observed during holiday periods, but analysis shows that westbound Friday pm peak traffic flows in March reach similar levels to an August Friday albeit over a shorter part of the day. As traffic grows over time then congestion will increase during the working week as well as during holiday periods. The full range of differing traffic flows at different times of the year will inform the design of the scheme.
Design	Whoever suggested upgrading Slate Lane to a highway to connect Downhead. To find such a proposal reaching an approval stage where it is published in a technical assessment raises the issue as to whether the current consultants are worthy of being retained or paid out of public funds.	These proposals will not reach approval stage before Summer 2018 when Highways England plans to submit their application for a Development Consent Order. Until that stage the design proposals will be subject to review and improvement to ensure the best solution is reached.
Design	It's not entirely clear whether the new A303 would use the present one and widen it?	Although the chosen preferred route (Option 1) new dual carriageway will follow the existing road corridor, it is unlikely much of the existing road will form part of the new dual carriageway as the alignment is not of a sufficient standard to be adopted for high speed (70mph) use. The extent to which the existing A303 will remain in use for local traffic will be made clear at the next consultation stage.
Design	Many comments about concern of a 6 lane highway being built. Please explain/confirm about junctions and dual carriageway.	This scheme is part of the Government's strategy to create a dual carriageway Expressway to the South West, with 2-lanes on each carriageway. Junction layouts will be developed and presented at the next consultation stage.

Design	If Route 2 is preferred, then what would happen to the corridor of land between the Route 2 and the existing A303? Would it be open to further development i.e. commercial or residential?	Option 1 has been chosen as the preferred route, so the basis of this question does not arise.
Design	How do you consider the impact on local villages when deciding on new junctions to be created?	Highways England is committed to creating a network that works for the local communities as well as longer distance traffic. Accommodating local traffic movements safely and efficiently will be integral to optimising the design of the new junctions, as will accommodating safe walking, cycling and equestrian movements. Details will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Design	Option 1 goes close by many residential properties, which is not good for the residences health and wellbeing. Option 2, although longer, does not have a steep uphill climb and has none of the above disadvantages (ref to residences health and wellbeing).	Health and well-being is a key consideration for Highways England and has been taken into account in the overall comparison of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two options, leading to the choice of Option 1 as the preferred route. The overall assessment is presented in the Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website.
Lighting	Option 2 will also bring noise and light pollution to a large population which at present has none i.e. the villages of Babcary, Foddington and South Barrow and outlying houses and farms.	These considerations have fed into the assessment (set out in the Scheme Assessment Report) which has led to Option 1 being chosen as the preferred route.
Local roads	Access: How would I access from the junction of Howell Hill and Steart Road?	The details of how access will be provided to all local destinations and facilities will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Local roads	Access of local facilities: How would access to Queen Camel via Gason Lane or Steart Hill be available?	The details of how access will be provided to all local destinations and facilities will be presented at the next consultation stage.

Local roads	Traits Lane is a single track road as are all of the adjoining roads which are used by agricultural vehicles any increase in traffic would be dangerous and cause significant congestion.	This comment is noted and will be considered during the next stage of the scheme's development.
Option 1 traffic	Option 1 would increase the traffic flow (rat run) via Downhead and Keep Street as Howell Hill would not be available for traffic travelling between Somerton and Sherbourne.	Access to Howell Hill will still be available with Option 1. It is not anticipated that the scheme will cause an increase of traffic on Keep Street, but the implications for local traffic movements will be clearly presented when the scheme details are presented at the next consultation stage.
Option 2	Option 2 pref - My decision is from a safety point of view. If Option 1 is decided upon I understand that Gason Lane and Traits Lane (Eyewell Lane) may be blocked off. What guarantee would you have to prevent travellers stopping at the top of these lanes?	There will be no stopping-up of local roads without there being satisfactory alternative means of accommodating local traffic movements. Relevant details will be made available at the next consultation stage.
Option 2 Access	Option 2: No access to road between Podimore and Sparkford, thus removing the Road Investment Strategy of accidents from joining traffic.	Option 1 has been selected as the preferred route. Access between the proposed dual carriageway and local roads to Podimore and Sparkford will be designed to ensure the safety of traffic making these journeys.
Options	Whilst I can see that, from the technical report, there is little difference between the two options, on balance I prefer Option 2. My reasons: It is more cost effective to the exchequer - which, as a tax payer, is an important consideration. During the period of construction it will, in my view, lead to far less disruption and will ensure a much smoother transition from the old to a new route at point of changeover. Once complete, should there be an accident on the new route (Option 2) it will lead to a	These considerations have fed into the overall assessment of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two options which has weighed in favour of Option 1, and led to it being chosen as the preferred route. The overall assessment is set out in Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website.

	<p>shorter recovery route for diverted traffic. Plus the old route will provide a natural relief route should there be an issue. Whereas, an accident on Option 1 would probably cause traffic to divert through our village which would be very unpleasant. As a walker - Option 2 will make my access to the areas I currently walk in on the north side of the current A303 much safer than is currently the case and make my life safer and more enjoyable. Whilst there will be winners and losers for both routes - from a noise pollution perspective - there will be a net benefit for more people via Option 2 - though not a main consideration this will be a life improvement for more people than Option 1.</p>	
RNAS Yeovilton	<p>There should be a new road linking the Podimore roundabout with RNAS Yeovilton. This would then take that traffic off the feeder road and give a quicker and more appropriate access into RNAS Yeovilton. Is this a local authority question - out of scheme scope?</p>	<p>While a new road linking Podimore roundabout with RNAS Yeovilton is not part of the scope of this scheme, we will work with the local highway authority to ensure this scheme does not have a negative impact on the local road network.</p>
Safety	<p>The roundabout at Sparkford is also an accident black spot. Vehicles have been travelling westbound on dual carriageway up to 70 mph for a considerable time. Suddenly they are thrown on to a roundabout that looks large and negotiable at speed. However the westbound exit of the A303 narrows and many lorries have failed to negotiate it. The speed traffic entering the roundabout presents a major</p>	<p>The scheme proposes a new grade-separated junction to replace the existing Hazlegrove Roundabout which will be designed to accommodate safe movements of through traffic and local traffic. Details will be presented at the next consultation stage.</p>

	risk for those coming from Hazlegrove school entrance and the entry from Sparkford village.	
Scheme scope	Should the scheme not extend the dualling from S Petherton to the Ilminster/A358 junction - the existing single carriageway/single-dual lane section between these points is a much a bottleneck as the section between Sparkford and Ilchester.	Dualling the A303 from S Petherton to Ilminster is part of the Government's planned programme of improvements, contained in its Road Investment Strategy, for upgrading the A303/A358 corridor to a dual carriageway expressway. However it is not part of this scheme; instead it is due to be brought forward in future road investment periods.
Traffic	Traffic on this stretch frequently crawls along behind slow vehicles, although' another problem is traffic ignoring the speed limit. When approaching the Plowage Lane route to the village from the West one has to sit in the middle of the two lanes of traffic for what seems like ages, being buffeted by the wind from high sided vehicles in both directions. Turning right (eastwards) from the same junction is frequently hazardous as one has to negotiate both directions of traffic for a gap but also traffic coming from Downhead turning right and left onto the 303	This comment is noted and is one of the problems being addressed by the scheme.
Traffic Flow	Seems to give a better traffic flow for the heavy through flow on the new A303 and for local traffic and roads surrounding.	This comment is noted and is one of the many reasons why this scheme has been prioritised in the Government's Road Investment Strategy.

Non-motorised Users	Ensure there are well designed, safe, convenient crossing points for cyclists.	This is a fundamental aim of the scheme. Relevant proposals will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Non-motorised Users	I do want equestrian routes to be considered.	This will be considered during the ongoing development of the scheme, with details presented at the next consultation stage.
Non-motorised Users	The last few years footpaths have been blocked to discourage walkers and Downhead Lane hedges removed which is a shame as this is a lovely area.	Facilitating the use of existing footpaths intercepted by the A303 will be a key consideration in developing the scheme proposals for accommodating safe rights-of-way movements. Details will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Non-motorised Users	This junction is far too dangerous to use currently, there are bridleways over the A303 going into Babcary but I wouldn't want to cross here with a car let alone a horse.	Facilitating the use of existing bridleways intercepted by the A303 will be a key consideration in developing the scheme proposals for accommodating safe rights-of-way movements. Details will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Non-motorised Users	Option 2 would require up to 11 bridges to satisfy severance of Non-Motorised Traffic and all vehicular traffic.	Option 1 has been selected as the preferred route. Option 2 will not be progressed further.
Non-motorised Users	Option 2 will be easier to construct and avoids potential increased adverse effects on the properties adjacent to the existing A303. Option 2 as a completely new off-line route is also easier to make compatible with the aspiration for Expressway status, with less junctions and (perhaps) higher standard of alignment, not compromised by following existing A303. Option 2 with the complete retention of the existing A303 provides access for NMUs, local traffic and slow moving vehicles (e.g. horse drawn vehicles, agricultural traffic) whereas Option 1 does not - at least this level of detail isn't shown.	These considerations have fed into the overall assessment of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two options which has weighed in favour of Option 1, and led to it being chosen as the preferred route. The overall assessment is set out in Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website. Facilitating safe motorised and non-motorised local movements will be a key consideration in developing the scheme proposals further. More details will be presented at the next consultation stage.



	As prohibition of these types of users is a core Expressway requirement it isn't obvious how Option 1 can be compatible with Expressway requirements, unless a separate local access road is provided (based on the maps being from Howell Hill to the north of Gason Lane?), otherwise the prohibited users would face lengthy diversions which legally may not be a sustainable position?	
Non-motorised Users	At the moment as soon as the current stretch of A303 gets busy or delayed due to accident all of the traffic via sat nav attempts to come through Wales, this is a single track country lane that has lots of walkers and cyclists, we have no bridleways here either and we cannot ride safely due to traffic speeding through the village trying to find an alternative route.	This comment is noted. Consideration of how the scheme can best interact with the local road network will be integral to developing the best solution for local communities and longer distance traffic. Accompanying details will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Non-motorised Users	Although I do support option 2, I feel it would be important to install safe animal crossings, under or over the road.	Option 1 has been selected as the preferred route, and will be designed having consideration to this point.
Non-Motorised Users	It would impact on 2 byways, 4 restricted byways, 60 footpaths, one national cycle route.	Facilitating the use of existing rights-of-way intercepted by the A303 will be a key consideration in developing the scheme proposals for maintaining and accommodating safe rights-of-way movements with the scheme in place. Details will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Non-Motorised Users	As a dog walker who likes to walk in the Downhead and Steart Hill area, crossing the road (at either point) often feels like I am taking my life into my hands. It is high time the route is improved to a dual carriageway and access to the route from	Facilitating safe pedestrian movements intercepted by the A303 will be a key consideration in developing the scheme proposals moving forward. Details will be presented at the next consultation stage.

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	our village (West Camel) improved from a safety perspective.	
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Theme: Local Community		
Theme Area	Public Response	Highways England Summary
Equality and diversity	How will the needs of disabled and elderly drivers, passengers or pedestrians will be properly taken into account?	Highways England has recently published its Accessibility Strategy, which can be viewed online at <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/highways-englands-accessibility-strategy">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/highways-englands-accessibility-strategy</a> . Option 1, the preferred route, will be developed in line with this strategy.
Future Development	It will allow ribbon development along the existing road, bring services and jobs to the area and provide extra rest facilities for users of the A303.	This comment is noted although Highways England would make two points of clarification. Firstly, Highways England does not have any plans to promote development within this corridor of land. Any development beyond the scope of this strategic road project would be a matter for the local planning authority, South Somerset District Council. Secondly, there are no proposals to provide additional services facilities because there is nearby provision at the Podimore Junction.
Landholders	It would leave a strip of farm land marooned between two major roads, difficult to access and to farm.	We have begun consultation with affected land-owners and these discussions will continue to ensure that the scheme impacts are fully understood, with access being provided as necessary.
Landholders	The map for Option 2 provides no information on how landowners gain access to the cut-off fields. Can you confirm design approach to this?	Option 1 has been selected as the preferred route. Consultation with individual land-owners along the route has already begun and this will continue to ensure any impacts on land that is directly affected by the construction of the road are properly mitigated. In the case of direct accesses, it is likely that access to plots of land will need to be re-provided from the nearest junction or local road.
Local Businesses	Option 1 will help sustain the businesses that lie along that section of the A303 and rely on the passing traffic.	Option 1 has been selected as the preferred route and this point will be taken into consideration as part of the ongoing scheme development.
Local connectivity	Option 1 is an established route along where people live with proper provision for local road access.	Option 1 has been selected as the preferred route and these concerns will be taken into consideration as part of the ongoing scheme development.
Local Connectivity	Option 1 is far better, as long as you can still have access to Babcary and Queen Camel via a new junction. This is very important.	Option 1 has been selected as the preferred route. This comment is noted and will be considered during the next stage of the scheme's development.

Local impact	Less disruption: Residents of West Camel. Exiting A303. Less noise and pollution. Less properties affected, less intrusive. Local roads: keep the flow of commercial, holiday and passing traffic to the north and predominately away from local roads. Free up local roads for local purposes. Correct?	Option 1 has been selected as the preferred route. The scheme proposals will provide a modern dual carriageway serving both longer distance and local traffic. The concerns raised will be taken into consideration as part of the ongoing scheme development. The developed scheme proposals will then be presented at the next consultation stage.
Local impact	Option 2 will take the traffic away from the local village of West Camel. Construction would also be possible with less disruption and chaos to the current traffic flow.	These considerations have fed into the overall assessment of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two options which has weighed in favour of Option 1, and led to it being chosen as the preferred route. The overall assessment is set out in Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website.
Local impact	Less traffic through Queen Camel	Option 1 has been selected as the preferred route. The current traffic model shows that there would be less vehicles on an average day going through Queen Camel of around 500 in 2022 and around 1000 in 2037. These figures will be updated at the next consultation stage.
Local impact	I would like more information on how traffic flow disruption would be minimised. Podimore roundabout dangerous when traffic for A37 comes against waiting traffic at the lights for A303 - widening lanes here would make it safer.	An upgrade of the Podimore Roundabout is part of the Government's planned programme of improvements, contained in its Road Investment Strategy, for upgrading the A303/A358 corridor to a dual carriageway expressway. However it is not part of this scheme; instead it is due to be brought forward in future road investment periods. More information of traffic flows relating to the assessment of this scheme will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Local impact	Option 2 would impact on the local farming community, hamlet, local communities and local businesses.	Option 1 has been selected as the preferred route and consideration of such impacts will continue to inform the ongoing scheme development. More information will be presented at the next consultation stage.
School access	Impact on the local school and local roads accessing the school	We have already begun engaging with Hazlegrove School, with access arrangements being determined during scheme's ongoing development. Details will be presented at the next consultation stage.

Theme: Public Consultation		
Theme Area	Public Response	Highways England Summary
Consultation	How much extra money has been spent having yet another consultation? This was all done very comprehensively 10 years ago and nothing has changed since then.	Things have changed, with the scheme now being promoted as part of the Government's strategy to create an expressway to the South West for example. The planning process has also changed through the introduction of the Development Consent Order process (under the Planning Act) being applicable to nationally significant infrastructure projects, which this scheme is. The large bank of knowledge gathered from previous iterations of the scheme has also helped to inform the options presented for consultation, and will continue to help the ongoing development of the scheme.
Funding	What assurances do we have that the next gov't will continue this project, or will it be yet another waste of money/ time. This is after all - what - the third proposal in 15 years.	The scheme is part of the Government's strategy to create an expressway to the South West. Without the scheme, and the others like it on the A303 corridor, the strategy would be called into doubt.
Consultation	I wish to register my major concern is with Highways England and their lack of information and openness in their public consultation meetings, with stakeholders, Councillors and with the public alike. This fuels uncertainty and fear and does not allow a reasoned decision to be made. The lack of openness with information, that is said not to exist yet is to be found in the Technical Appraisal Report, needs to be addressed.	Highways England seeks to be completely open about its proposals. The consultation was carried out at an early stage in the scheme's development, when limited information is available, specifically to provide the opportunity to offer their views on what they would like the scheme to be before details become fixed. Option 1 has now been selected as a preferred route and another round of consultation will be carried out when more detailed information will be available, enabling the public to offer their views on those more detailed proposals. The information supporting the choice of Option 1 as the preferred route can be found in the Scheme Assessment Report available on the scheme website.
Consultation	The lack of detailed plans/maps when compared to those available back in 1991 warrants further investigation. The removal of information published on websites is also	Information that was made available at the public enquiry in 1991 was different compared to that which was made available at the public consultation this year as the scheme was then at a later stage in its development with much more information available. In terms of removal of information from websites, all the consultation material can still be viewed here: <a href="https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/he/a303-sparkford-">https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/he/a303-sparkford-</a>

	a concern which is unprofessional and can be seen as dishonest.	<a href="#">to-ilchester/</a> . In addition, the website has also been updated to include information supporting the decision-making on the preferred route, including this Report on Public Consultation and the Scheme Assessment Report. Moving forward, the next stage will be a further consultation with more detailed information available for the public to comment on.
Government policy	Option 2 Does not fit in with current government policy to: -Protect undeveloped land, and favour the use of existing brownfield or already developed land. -Protect the environment -Protect the landscape -Protect heritage, archaeological and historical assets	The scheme is part of the Government's strategy to create a dual carriageway expressway to the South West. Its compliance with other relevant policies will continue to be assessed during its ongoing development and promotion through the planning process to secure the necessary Development Consent Order.
Past proposals	In 1993 The Department of Transport concluded that Option 1 was the decided route. In 2003 The Highways Agency concluded that Option 1 would also be the route. What is different now? The brochure states that the proposed works will take 2.5 - 3 years to construct. Why would it take so long when the 1993 brochure states that the work for the chosen option (option 1) would take 15 - 18 months. Why would it take double the length of time 25 years later?	Many things change over the years, such as environmental designations, flood zones, traffic volumes, and highway standards, meaning the old design cannot simply be dusted off and re-used. In addition, the planning process has changed for schemes of this nature which are deemed to be nationally significant infrastructure projects. The options have been re-assessed, as set out in the Technical Appraisal Report and Scheme Assessment Report, and Option 1 has emerged as the preferred route. The construction duration is a conservative estimates at present, and will be reviewed when the scheme has been developed to a more advanced stage, with more detail available of what is to be constructed. More information will be presented at the next consultation stage.

**Theme: Environment**

Theme Area	Public Response	Highways England Summary
Noise	Option 2 It would increase the traffic noise in Babcary, South Barrow and the surrounding areas.	Option 1 has been selected as the preferred route, but potential noise impacts will continue to be assessed and will inform the more detailed design proposals for the scheme, with accompanying mitigation to avoid or reduce impacts. Related details will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Countryside	It will ruin Camel Hill Farm, Vale Farm, Steart Hill Farm and Downhead Manor Farm plus a number of small holdings. Additionally it would also of course go through Paddle Wood, Yarcombe, the Old Pheasant Pen at Steart, and the Hunt coverts of Cogberry and Annis Hill.	These considerations have fed into the overall assessment of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two options which has weighed in favour of Option 1, and led to it being chosen as the preferred route. The overall assessment is set out in Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website. Such considerations will also continue to inform the ongoing development of the scheme moving forward.
Air quality	It will be taking a major road away from a residential area reducing air pollution. How will the air quality change?	Air quality impacts will be assessed, along with all other environmental impacts, during the ongoing development of the scheme. The assessments will inform the detailed design proposals and accompanying mitigation measures. Further information on changes to air quality will be presented at the next consultation stage, prior to a full Environmental Statement being published to accompany the planning application for development consent.
Archaeology	Valley is full of archaeology. The oldest map in Somerset is from 1573, and shows Camel Hill Farm and Hazlegrove Park. Many of the field names and boundaries are the same now as they were then. There has been no archaeological investigation on this route, unlike Route 1.	Option 1 has been selected as the preferred route, but potential archaeological/heritage impacts will continue to be assessed and will inform the more detailed design proposals for the scheme, with accompanying mitigation to avoid or reduce impacts. Related details will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Environmental factors	Route 2 less impact on quality of life (Noise, Pollution) for villagers from	These considerations have fed into the overall assessment of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two options which has weighed in favour of Option 1, and led

	Podimore, West Camel, Queen Camel and Sparkford	to it being chosen as the preferred route. The overall assessment is set out in Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website.
Environmental factors	At the consultation evening in Babcary one of your representatives confirmed that there would not be enough spoil generated to build screening bunds along the new route so this is a major concern as Babcary and its environs are a very quiet area.	The environmental assessment process and landscape design works are ongoing. Landscape, visual and noise effects will be fully assessed, with appropriate mitigation developed to minimise adverse effects, such as through the provision of bunds which would have an acoustic and landscape function, acoustic fences and planting. The design will be sensitive to each locality, and any necessary mitigation measures will be included as part of the scheme proposals. More details will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Environmental Impact Assessment	Has an Environmental Impact Assessment been conducted on both options? Biodiversity and wildlife population and activity are seasonal so a short time period would provide inaccurate information.	Sufficient environmental assessment has been undertaken to inform the comparison of both options as set out in Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website. A full environmental impact assessment will be carried out on the proposals for Option 1, as the selected preferred route, as part of its ongoing development. Further preliminary information will be presented at the next consultation stage, prior to a full Environmental Statement being published to accompany the planning application for development consent.
Environmental studies	Some time ago the A303 improvements from Sparkford to Mere were carried out along virgin countryside and I do not recall the various landowners petitioning that it should follow the existing A303 route for biodiversity reasons. What studies have been carried out on the long-term impact on dualling such roads? Is it possible that some species may be better protected along the shoulders of such roads?	These considerations will be informed by the ongoing environmental impact assessment for Option 1 as the chosen preferred route. In terms of biodiversity and wildlife, the work to date has included a habitat survey which provided a high-level overview of the existing habitats and the types of species they have the potential to support. Further ongoing work includes surveys for bats, badgers, dormice, great crested newts, birds (including barn owls), reptiles, otters and water voles, all of which are seasonally constrained. We are undertaking the protected species surveys at the most optimal survey windows, for the length of time stated in guidance, to ensure the survey results are robust. We will also undertake a full arboricultural survey. The results will feed into the ongoing environmental impact assessment work. Preliminary information will be presented at the next consultation stage, prior to a full Environmental Statement being published to accompany the planning application for development consent.



Farmland	Farmland. Can you include the work we have / are and will undertake	The assessment work undertaken to date has been reported in the Technical Appraisal Report and Scheme Assessment Report, both of which can be found on the scheme website. The continuing assessment will include Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) surveys, and will allow the development of appropriate mitigation measures to reduce any adverse effects. More information will be made available at the next consultation stage.
Flood Risk	Option 1 is further from the flood risk, providing greater resilience to climate change.	Option 1 has been selected as the preferred route, but potential flood considerations will continue to be assessed and will inform the more detailed design proposals for the scheme, with accompanying mitigation to avoid or reduce impacts. Related details will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Flooding	Can you include the work we have / are and will undertake	The potential flooding impacts associated with the construction and operation phases of the scheme are being assessed as part of the ongoing environmental impact assessment. We will produce a detailed Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) on the preferred Option 1, and an associated drainage design which will ensure that flood risk is not increased by the scheme. This will be managed through the implementation of an appropriate drainage strategy - such as through the use of balancing ponds, drainage ditches, pipes and gulleys - to ensure that the scheme does not increase the susceptibility of the local area to flooding. More information will be presented at the next consultation stage, prior to a full Environmental Statement being published to accompany the planning application for development consent.
Flooding	Pref op 2 - Flood risk - on the 13 December 2008 and 4 January 2014 run off from the A303 inundated houses on in West Camel. The houses affected by this pluvial event are a couple of metres above the recognised floodplain and as such the owners were unprepared for their properties flooding. Any increase in the road surface area on Camel Hill will increase the effect of future pluvial flooding events in West Camel would only be exacerbated by adopting Option 1. The orographic effect Camel Hill has on the prevailing south westerly warm moist air	The scheme will be designed and constructed to ensure it does not give rise to any increase to the risk of flooding. This will be managed through the implementation of an appropriate drainage strategy - such as through the use of balancing ponds, drainage ditches, pipes and gulleys - to ensure that the scheme does not increase the susceptibility of the local area to flooding. More information will be presented at the next consultation stage, prior to a full Environmental Statement being published to accompany the planning application for development consent.

	blowing over the area exacerbates the effect of excessive rainfall and adds to the flooding threat to the south of the hill.	
Flooding	Run-off water concerns what will happen to the run-off water as we already suffer with flooding (Resident lives at Church farm barn. Podimore)	Following the choice of Option 1 for the preferred route, the scheme will be designed and constructed to ensure it does not give rise to any increase to the risk of flooding. This will be managed through the implementation of an appropriate drainage strategy - such as through the use of balancing ponds, drainage ditches, pipes and gulleys - to ensure that the scheme does not increase the susceptibility of the local area to flooding. More information will be presented at the next consultation stage, prior to a full Environmental Statement being published to accompany the planning application for development consent.
Flooding	The Environment Agency Flood Zone maps do not reflect this reality. By how much will the new road need to be raised up and at what cost?	
Flooding	I have heard mentioned in the presentations that tanks, ponds and run-off into the Dyke Brook will be built with Option 2, some 0.5 metre above the level of Steart Lane. This is a farce and fails to address primary concerns.	
Flooding	Where will the run off go? What will be done to prevent the existing flooding of Steart Lane from becoming worse? How much will the new road need to be raised to avoid this?	
Habitat	Option 1 has less impact on the wildlife: deer, foxes, adders and grass snakes, slow worms, owls, buzzards, kites, sparrow Hawks.	
Heritage	NPPF there is a duty on the decision taker to assess the significance of the heritage asset and to ensure that any harm to its significance is outweighed by public benefits. Quite clearly a scheme that reduces harm (option1) should be favoured to one that creates a much more	Option 1 has been selected as the preferred route, but potential heritage impacts will continue to be assessed and will inform the more detailed design proposals for the scheme, with accompanying mitigation to avoid or reduce impacts. Related details will be presented at the next consultation stage.

	destructive impact on the heritage asset (this being option 2).	
Land grade	In addition the route of Option 2 is Grade 2 and Grade 3 land (though it does not state whether Grade a or b, crucial as Grades 1 to 3a are classed as Best and Most Versatile Land) which should be preserved for agricultural use.	This consideration has fed into the overall assessment of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two options which has weighed in favour of Option 1, and led to it being chosen as the preferred route. The overall assessment is set out in Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website.
Land impact	We are very concerned about water run-off from new road onto our fields at Stockwich if option 1 is used.	Following the choice of Option 1 for the preferred route, the scheme will be designed and constructed to ensure it does not give rise to any adverse impacts from water run-off. This will be managed through the implementation of an appropriate drainage strategy - such as through the use of balancing ponds, drainage ditches, pipes and gulleys. More information will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Light pollution	Light pollution. Can you include the work we have / are and will undertake	The assessment work undertaken to date has been reported in the Technical Appraisal Report and Scheme Assessment Report, both of which can be found on the scheme website. Moving forward, light pollution will be part of the ongoing environmental impact assessment of the scheme during its continuing development. Further preliminary information will be presented at the next consultation stage, prior to a full Environmental Statement being published to accompany the planning application for development consent.
Long term impact	It would appear to have less long term effect on the life's of humans, animals and flora and fauna which we must take into serious consideration.	As part of the ongoing environmental impact assessment process, we are assessing potential impacts associated with flora, fauna and the local community. This will include a detailed assessment on Human Health and Wellbeing. Mitigation measures will be included as part of the scheme proposals to ensure that any adverse environmental effects are avoided or reduced. Further preliminary information will be presented at the next consultation stage, prior to a full Environmental Statement being published to accompany the planning application for development consent.

Loss of landscape	It would impact on registered parkland and ancient woodland, apart from destroying the landscape value as the Zone of Theological Visibility demonstrates.	This consideration has fed into the overall assessment of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two options which has weighed in favour of Option 1, and led to it being chosen as the preferred route. The overall assessment is set out in Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website. Moving forward, the potential impacts will continue to be assessed and will inform the more detailed design proposals for the scheme, with accompanying mitigation to avoid or reduce impacts. Related details will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Noise	Noise. Can you include the work we have / are and will undertake	The assessment work undertaken to date has been reported in the Technical Appraisal Report and Scheme Assessment Report, both of which can be found on the scheme website. Moving forward, noise impacts will be part of the ongoing environmental impact assessment of the scheme during its continuing development. Further preliminary information will be presented at the next consultation stage, prior to a full Environmental Statement being published to accompany the planning application for development consent.
Noise	Use off: Noise prevention slopes etc. should be used to keep as much noise as possible from housing villages Option 1 in particular would require this if this were the chosen option Option 2 makes better use of uninhabited areas and is therefore my favoured option.	Noise impacts have fed into the overall assessment of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two options which has weighed in favour of Option 1, and led to it being chosen as the preferred route. The overall assessment is set out in Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website. Moving forward, the potential impacts will continue to be assessed and will inform the more detailed design proposals for the scheme, with accompanying mitigation to avoid or reduce impacts, such as the inclusion of earth mounds or noise barriers if appropriate. Related details will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Noise	Option 1 seems messy with too many roads crossing underneath. If the 303 (old one) is retained with the new, the noise will be deafening - also being on high ground the noise will carry for miles. Noise impact?	Noise impacts have fed into the overall assessment of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two options which has weighed in favour of Option 1, and led to it being chosen as the preferred route. The overall assessment is set out in Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website. Moving forward, the potential impacts will continue to be assessed and will inform the more detailed design proposals for the scheme, with accompanying mitigation to avoid or reduce impacts, such as the inclusion of earth mounds or noise barriers if appropriate. Related details will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Noise	Try to create noise breaks when building the road, the existing A303 Sparkford Bypass is heard distinctly in South Barrow. How can this be mitigated?	Noise impacts have fed into the overall assessment of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two options which has weighed in favour of Option 1, and led to it being chosen as the preferred route. The overall assessment is set out in Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website. Moving forward, the potential impacts will continue to be assessed and will inform the more detailed design proposals for the scheme, with accompanying mitigation to avoid or reduce impacts, such as the inclusion of earth mounds or noise barriers if appropriate. Related details will be presented at the next consultation stage.

Noise impact	By locating the dual carriageway on the low ground to the north of Howell Hill the prevailing south westerly winds will carry the road/traffic noise away from the main residences at Downhead, Steart Hill and West Camel.	This comment is noted. Noise impacts have fed into the overall assessment of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two options which has weighed in favour of Option 1, and led to it being chosen as the preferred route. The overall assessment is set out in Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website. Moving forward, the potential impacts, including the effects of the prevailing wind, will continue to be assessed and will inform the more detailed design proposals for the scheme, with accompanying mitigation to avoid or reduce impacts, such as the inclusion of earth mounds or noise barriers if appropriate. Related details will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Noise impact	All effort must be made to achieve maximum possible road noise reduction to local residents.	Noise impacts have fed into the overall assessment of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two options which has weighed in favour of Option 1, and led to it being chosen as the preferred route. The overall assessment is set out in Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website. Moving forward, the potential impacts will continue to be assessed and will inform the more detailed design proposals for the scheme, with accompanying mitigation to avoid or reduce impacts, such as the inclusion of earth mounds or noise barriers if appropriate. Related details will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Noise impact	Option 2 Significantly reduces noise pollution in the local villages.	
Noise mitigation	Incorporation of bunding or noise attenuating structures along the roadside past Podimore.	
Option 2 Noise	Option 2 - Noise from the road will travel northwards towards the village of Babcary?	Noise impacts have fed into the overall assessment of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two options which has weighed in favour of Option 1, and led to it being chosen as the preferred route. The overall assessment is set out in Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website. Moving forward, the potential impacts will continue to be assessed and will inform the more detailed design proposals for the scheme, with accompanying mitigation to avoid or reduce impacts, such as the inclusion of earth mounds or noise barriers if appropriate. Related details will be presented at the next consultation stage.

Noise impact	Planting of trees alongside the carriageway, as near Tintinhull further to the west, will help minimise the noise impact during northerly winds.	Noise impacts have fed into the overall assessment of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two options which has weighed in favour of Option 1, and led to it being chosen as the preferred route. The overall assessment is set out in Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website. Moving forward, the potential impacts will continue to be assessed and will inform the more detailed design proposals for the scheme, with accompanying mitigation to avoid or reduce impacts, such as the inclusion of earth mounds or noise barriers if appropriate. Related details will be presented at the next consultation stage. Tree planting will be considered, but in itself will do little to minimise noise impact without it being a substantial area of dense woodland.
Planting	Plant proper trees each side of the new carriageway and take that planting to the existing dual carriageway towards Mere.	A landscape design is currently being progressed as part of the environmental assessment work. Planting will be proposed to minimise adverse landscape and visual effects and integrate the scheme into the surrounding landscape. Related details will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Noise and pollution	The A303 Option 2 would bring increased noise, light and unacceptable levels of air pollution to the residential areas of Babcary and Foddington.	Option 1 has been selected as the preferred route, but potential environmental impacts, including noise, lighting and air quality, will continue to be assessed and will inform the more detailed design proposals for the scheme, with accompanying mitigation to avoid or reduce impacts. Related details will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Pollution	Option 2 would bring noise and light pollution to our village (Babcary).	
Quiet tarmac	Quiet surface use. Complete the quiet tarmac project that was started two years ago. It was supposed to cover the whole road from Mere but patches were left which means the A303 noise at south and north Cadbury is as bad as it ever was.	The choice of surfacing will be determined in due course, taking into consideration the need to avoid creating unacceptable levels of traffic noise in the vicinity of local communities and amenities.
Road surface noise	It should be done in quiet tarmac, as the entire road should be. The noise from cars on dual carriageways is horrendous.	The choice of surfacing will be determined in due course, taking into consideration the need to avoid creating unacceptable levels of traffic noise in the vicinity of local communities and amenities.
Scheduled Monument	This site is also home to an undisturbed Scheduled Monument which would be	Option 1 has been selected as the preferred route, but potential heritage impacts will continue to be assessed and will inform the more detailed design proposals for the

	adversely affected by a main road passing within 100m.	scheme, with accompanying mitigation to avoid or reduce impacts. Related details will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Sparkford Vale	Option 2 would have a severe and damaging impact on the farmland and scenery of the Sparkford Vale, both visually and in terms of noise and pollution.	Option 1 has been selected as the preferred route, but all potential environmental impacts, including on the landscape and affected farmland, will continue to be assessed and will inform the more detailed design proposals for the scheme, with accompanying mitigation to avoid or reduce impacts. Related details will be presented at the next consultation stage.
Sparkford Vale	Option 1 will damage the Sparkford Vale less	
Wildlife	Wildlife. Can you include the work we have / are and will undertake	The assessment work undertaken to date has been reported in the Technical Appraisal Report and Scheme Assessment Report, both of which can be found on the scheme website. Moving forward, impacts on wildlife will be part of the ongoing environmental impact assessment of the scheme during its continuing development. Further preliminary information will be presented at the next consultation stage, prior to a full Environmental Statement being published to accompany the planning application for development consent.
Woodland	Woodland. Can you include the work we have / are and will undertake	The assessment work undertaken to date has been reported in the Technical Appraisal Report and Scheme Assessment Report, both of which can be found on the scheme website. Moving forward, impacts on woodland will be part of the ongoing environmental impact assessment of the scheme during its continuing development. Further preliminary information will be presented at the next consultation stage, prior to a full Environmental Statement being published to accompany the planning application for development consent.

## Letter comments from organisations

PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG		
Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
A303/A358/A30 Steering Group	<p>Strong support for the scheme as part of the expressway improving connectivity to the South West which would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create 21,400 jobs and deliver a £41.6bn boost to the economy</li> <li>• Deliver £21.2bn of taxation, welfare savings, disposable income and tourism benefits</li> <li>• Create £1.9bn in transport benefits from reduced journey times and greater resilience</li> <li>• Save 1807 fatal or serious accidents</li> <li>• Reduce carbon emissions by 9%</li> </ul> <p>Deliver the dual carriageway improvement at the earliest opportunity, including junctions with adequate capacity to accommodate peak traffic flows.</p>	<p>Highways England is committed to delivering the scheme in pursuit of the Government’s commitment to deliver a dual carriageway expressway to the South West as set out in its Road Investment Strategy. With the choice of preferred route having been confirmed following the public consultation, the scheme will now be developed further to the next stage of statutory public consultation, prior to the planning application being submitted to secure development consent. This process will be pursued as quickly as possible whilst ensuring the best solution is developed to serve both longer distance and local traffic movements. This will secure a start of construction at the earliest opportunity.</p>
Babcary Parish Council	<p>Option 1 is essentially a brownfield site; it utilises the existing major trunk road to a considerable extent; impacting on homes and businesses already blighted by proximity to a main road. Option 2 is literally a greenfield site; it would put 3 miles of tarmac through the remarkably unspoilt Sparkford Vale and lose it for ever. Sparkford Vale is a sparsely populated and undeveloped farmland area rich in wildlife, very quiet and very dark (at night). This will be destroyed.</p>	<p>These considerations have informed the choice of Option 1 as the preferred route. The overall assessment informing the choice is set out in Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website. Moving forward, issues such as flood risk will continue to be assessed and will inform the more detailed design proposals for the scheme, with accompanying mitigation to avoid or reduce impacts. The scheme will be designed and constructed to ensure it does not give rise to any increase to the risk of flooding. This will be managed through the implementation of an</p>



**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

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Babcary Parish Council	<p>Sparkford Vale is very flat, low lying, and already prone to flooding. The Environment Agency flood map doesn't show it but the lane from Steart Hill to Babcary regularly floods throughout its length and is impassable to ordinary vehicles perhaps two or three times a year. Three miles of tarmac will create more of a problem. Where will the run off go?</p> <p>Sparkford Vale is prone to low lying fog. This is particularly the case at the foot of Steart Hill where it seems to "pool". This will create a severe risk for high speed traffic. What can be done to mitigate this risk?</p>	<p>appropriate drainage strategy - such as through the use of balancing ponds, drainage ditches, pipes and gulleys - to ensure that the scheme does not increase the susceptibility of the local area to flooding. More information will be presented at the next consultation stage, prior to a full Environmental Statement being published to accompany the planning application for development consent.</p>
Babcary Parish Council	<p>We stress the necessity of a full east/west link road between Sparkford/Hazlegrove and Podimore roundabout (such as the existing A303) in addition to the new expressway regardless of the option chosen. This will help mitigate safety concerns during periods of construction and whenever the new expressway is compromised, in addition to providing local access.</p>	<p>Highways England is committed to creating a network that works for the local communities as well as longer distance traffic. Accommodating local traffic movements safely and efficiently will be integral to optimising the overall scheme proposals, as will accommodating safe walking, cycling and equestrian movements. This includes accommodating safe movements during construction. Details will be presented at the next consultation stage.</p>
British Horse Society	<p>The consultation does not appear to accord with Highways England recently published Accessibility Strategy.</p>	<p>The public consultation has enabled local residents, the travelling public, statutory bodies and user groups such as the British Horse Society to express their views about the proposed scheme at an early stage in its development, having regard to the problems they face with the existing road and how they might wish the scheme to address those problems. The consultation has captured all journey types and all types of user, providing a good foundation of background knowledge upon which to develop the design of the scheme in line with Highways England's relevant strategies (including the Accessibility Strategy). Moving forward, the scheme</p>

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

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		design will take into account the feedback received. The design proposals will be presented at the next consultation stage, including proposals designed to accommodate non-motorised users.
Campaign for Better Transport	Overall, we are not happy with the expansion of the A303/A30/A358 road corridor which, if all of the various single carriageway sections are converted into dual carriageways, will significantly increase traffic over and above what might be expected from expanding just one section in isolation. This will lead to a worsening of congestion overall and if it encourages more people to drive to the south west, it could overload many of the rural roads that are an attractive feature of the area. It would be far better to encourage tourism and improve access by investing in public transport, walking and cycling to cut both longer distance and local motorised traffic.	The Strategic Road Network (SRN) plays an important role in the national economy. An improved and efficient SRN will maintain competitiveness and help the economy to grow, for example in accommodating the planned employment and housing growth in the south west region. Without investment in the A303 corridor, the existing congestion on the SRN caused by the single carriageway sections will worsen and potentially constrain economic development. The Government has been mindful of this in determining its strategy for creating a dual carriageway expressway to the South West as set out in its Road Investment Strategy. Highways England has been charged with delivering that strategy.
Campaign to Protect Rural England - Somerset	In CPRE Somerset's view, both options are unacceptable but, if there is to be a widening scheme at Sparkford, then Option 1 is very much preferable as it causes less damage to the countryside. Fundamentally, however, we believe that connectivity for the South West could be achieved in far less damaging and intrusive ways. There remains the desire for a robust railway link from Waterloo to Exeter and beyond via Basingstoke.	The Government has determined that improved connectivity to the South West is to be achieved by creating a dual carriageway expressway as set out in its Road Investment Strategy. Highways England has been charged with delivering that strategy, with this scheme being part of the programme of schemes needed to achieve the strategy. Potential impacts on the countryside have informed the choice of Option 1 as the preferred route. The overall assessment informing the choice is set out in Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website.
	Option 1 follows the general direction and alignment of the existing single carriageway. Hence dualling it would involve minimal change to the existing	These considerations have fed into the overall assessment of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two options which has weighed in favour of Option 1, and led to it being chosen as

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
Cary Moor Parish Council	<p>environment; just 'more of the same' one might say. Option 2 on the other hand, would drive straight across that part of the Sparkford Vale to the North of the present road, destroying an area of natural beauty which includes four farms and affecting the Hazlegrove House Registered Park and Gardens to a much greater degree than Option 1. The view of the Sparkford Vale from the villages of Babcary and South Barrow would be ruined forever, to say nothing of the noise and light pollution and increased liability to flooding, resulting from the high water table in the area.</p>	<p>the preferred route. The overall assessment is set out in Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website. Such considerations will also continue to inform the ongoing development of the scheme moving forward.</p>
CLA	<p>Registering strong support for Option 1, consistent with the findings of a previously-held public inquiry into the scheme in 1994, accompanied by an exposition of issues relating to a technical evaluation covering costs and benefits, plus an environmental evaluation covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Landscape</li> <li>· Historic environment</li> <li>· Biodiversity</li> <li>· Water</li> <li>· Severance</li> <li>· Environmental pollution.</li> </ul>	<p>These technical and environmental considerations have fed into the overall assessment of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two options which has weighed in favour of Option 1, and led to it being chosen as the preferred route. The overall assessment is set out in Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website. These considerations will also continue to inform the ongoing development of the scheme moving forward.</p>
Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership	<p>The Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership does not have a fixed view on whether the online route or the offline route should be chosen.</p> <p>However, we would stress:</p>	<p>These considerations will all be to the fore in developing the optimal design proposals for the scheme.</p>

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· the importance of creating a free-flowing route with grade-separation of new junctions</li> <li>· the desirability of reducing the number of junctions</li> <li>· the need to consider alternative future provision for cyclists and agricultural vehicles to enable the route to be of expressway standard.</li> </ul>	
Historic England	<p>From the information available it appears clear that, notwithstanding the major impact upon the Registered Park and Garden (RPaG) from either option, the partially on-line Option 1 might avoid a significant adverse impact upon the setting of the Downhead Medieval settlement, provided that there is no impact upon the Roman settlement site, and any significant archaeological remains that might be associated with it beyond the present scheduling constraints.</p>	<p>Potential heritage impacts have informed the choice of Option 1 as the preferred route. Moving forward, potential heritage impacts will continue to be assessed and will inform the more detailed design proposals for the scheme, with accompanying mitigation to avoid or reduce impacts. Related details will be presented at the next consultation stage.</p>
Ilchester Parish Council	<p>The council's reasons were that the existing A303 can remain as a filter road, with access to the B3151 which would alleviate local traffic volume, which will benefit local residents. This is based on the fact that RNAS Yeovilton is adjacent to the Parish with its Service personnel, who have to get to their place of employment. There is an Annual Air Day attracting 35,000 visitors and if the B3151 is closed by Wayne's Bistro to access onto the A303 as in Option 1, the impact on Ilchester and the adjacent villages will be considerable.</p>	<p>These considerations, as appropriate, have fed into the overall assessment of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two options presented for consultation, which has weighed in favour of Option 1, and led to it being chosen as the preferred route. The overall assessment is set out in Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website. Moving forward, the considerations will continue to inform the more detailed design proposals for the scheme. Further details will be presented at the next consultation stage.</p>

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
	There is a need to maintain access onto and from the A303 both at the Podimore and Sparkford ends to allow businesses and local to use the A303.	
King's Bruton School	There is a concern that the route will create both noise and light pollution that will affect the school.	Environmental considerations such as these have fed into the overall assessment of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two options which has weighed in favour of Option 1, and led to it being chosen as the preferred route. The overall assessment is set out in Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website. Moving forward, the potential impacts will continue to be assessed and will inform the more detailed design proposals for the scheme, with accompanying mitigation to avoid or reduce impacts. Related details will be presented at the next consultation stage.
National Trust	We agree that the A303 from Sparkford to Ilchester needs upgrading in the form of a new section of dual carriageway but we strongly advocate the need for a sensitively designed scheme that minimises its impacts on the natural and historic environments. In particular, we would ask that potential impacts on the views and setting of Lytes Cary and its estate (and St Michael's Hill) are fully considered and that potential environmental enhancements along the route options are fully explored.	The potential effects on the views and setting of Lytes Cary and St Michael's Hill will be assessed as part of the ongoing environmental assessment for the scheme during its continuing development. Further preliminary information will be presented at the next consultation stage, prior to a full Environmental Statement being published to accompany the planning application for development consent.
Natural England	Based on the information available at this stage, Option 2 is likely to result in a more significant impact on biodiversity than Option 1. It intersects Annis Hill Local Wildlife Site which comprises Ancient Woodland, a priority habitat under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). We would highlight paragraph 118 in the National Planning Policy Framework which states that	Potential biodiversity impacts have informed the choice of Option 1 as the preferred route. Moving forward, potential biodiversity impacts will continue to be assessed and will inform the more detailed design proposals for the scheme, with accompanying mitigation to avoid or reduce impacts. Related details will be presented at the next consultation stage.

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
	<p>there should be a presumption against authorising development resulting in the loss of irreplaceable habitats including ancient woodland.</p>	
<p>NFU</p>	<p><b>Impact on Farm Businesses</b>                      We do understand the need to upgrade the single lane sections of the A303 to dual carriageways to improve traffic flow and safety for the benefit of local communities, business and tourists as well as the enhance connectivity to the South West region. But many of our members’ businesses will be significantly impacted by the proposed route Option 2 and associated construction works between Sparkford and Ilchester. The amount of land that would have to be taken out of agricultural production is far greater for Option 2 than Option 1 and so the impact on the farm businesses is far greater.</p> <p>The proposal to take the A303 in a loop to the north of the existing A303 means that the dual road would have to be constructed through a very unspoilt valley presently with only agricultural production taking place. The Valley has the Dyke Brook lying to the north of the proposed route which is liable to flooding. Option 2 would as it is presently highlighted cut right through the middle of three existing farm businesses and so the road would sever the land holdings greatly affecting the running and operations taking place. Three bridges have been highlighted in the proposal of Option 2 to provide access to all the land that would be severed but the impact on the farm businesses from so much land</p>	<p>Considerations of impacts on farming, as relevant and appropriate at this early stage in the development of the scheme, have fed into the overall assessment of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two options put forward for consultation. This has weighed in favour of Option 1, and led to it being chosen as the preferred route. The overall assessment is set out in Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website.</p>

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
	<p>being compulsory purchased, remaining land severed and only the bridges providing access will mean that some of the businesses will not be sustainable. It will completely affect how some of the arable and livestock units are run. One farm business has a successful high level equestrian business and if Option 2 was the chosen route there would be a very large question mark over whether it was possible or not to continue running this business.</p> <p>While the proposals for Option 1 following the existing road and carrying out expansion works to create the dualling has a far less of an impact on farm holdings due to the proposed new road only cutting through the top northern boundaries of holdings and fields.</p> <p>While the proposals for Option 1 following the existing road and carrying out expansion works to create the dualling has a far less of an impact on farm holdings due to the proposed new road only cutting through the top northern boundaries of holdings and fields.</p> <p>It has been stated that as it exists the A303 is preventing businesses from reaching their potential and hampering quality of life in communities. This might be so but if Option 2 is taken forward this will have a major impact on four farming businesses and be far worse than just preventing reaching their potential. It could</p>	

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
	<p>greatly disadvantage or even destroy the businesses and so will do far more than just hamper quality of life.</p> <p>The NFU does understand that the infrastructure needs upgrading and for this to help improve the local economy but it must not be done to the detriment of farming businesses. Highways England must consider in greater detail the impact on the farm businesses and the amount of land that would have to be compulsory purchased when deciding on which option to take forward and the design.</p> <p>Further the NFU is very disappointed to see the lack of detail in regard to the impact on farming businesses covered in the technical report. It is mentioned at paragraph 3.1.2 how the local area is rural having mainly field boundaries and at paragraph 3.5.2 how the land is in agricultural use, with a mixture of arable and livestock and is grade two and three. There is no mention of the agricultural businesses that would be impacted and no areas of land that would have to be taken out of agricultural production have been highlighted. This is expected at the very least within a technical report.</p> <p>It has been stated that the field pattern to the north of the existing scheme comprises large geometric field patterns and it is these fields that will cut and severed so badly by Option 2. Whereas the fields affected by</p>	



**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

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	<p>option 1 will only be cut to the north of the boundaries and so severance is not such an issue.</p> <p>Further under the heading Constraints at 4.1 in the technical report there is no mention of agricultural land/land take under the land use and community constraints.</p> <p>All efforts must be made to maintain access to land from either Option 1 or 2.</p>	
NFU	<p><b>Use Restrictions &amp; Access</b>            Furthermore, we expect that the upgraded road will not carry any limitations or restrictions which would prevent any type of agricultural vehicles accessing and using the entire A303. As a result of this consultation we require Highways England to clarify that there will be no restrictions to agricultural vehicles on the A303 to appease the concerns that the local farming community have about this issue.</p>	<p>Recognising the need to maintain safe and efficient farm access, consideration as to how this can best be achieved will be a key input to the ongoing development of the scheme's design. Related proposals will be put forward at the next consultation stage, having been discussed with affected parties.</p>
NFU	<p>Weight Limit restrictions: No weight restrictions, or other restrictions, should be imposed on agricultural vehicles using the A303. In addition, there should be no weight or other restrictions placed on agricultural vehicles and the type of agricultural material being transported (for example hay and straw) on the A303. Any additional local weight limit restrictions imposed to protect communities from diverted or rat-run traffic</p>	

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
	before, during or after construction must not impact farm vehicles.	
NFU	Access to the A303: Agricultural vehicles must have access to the new proposed A303 dual carriageway and this must be considered early in the design stage once a preferred route has been identified. For example, long diversion routes to access the A303 will not be acceptable for farm traffic as this will have a massive impact on the viability of some farm businesses. The A303 is a very important link road for rural businesses in the area and as such should not leave any of them at a disadvantage.	
NFU	<p><b>Construction Impacts</b> The consultation documents highlight the need for careful and considered planning to ensure the least issues caused to road users and the World Heritage Site. However, we feel strongly that the impact on farm businesses in the immediate and local area must also be thoroughly reviewed and considered ahead of any construction works. Our comments on the construction of this scheme are as follows:</p> <p><b>Economic Impacts</b> The consultation documents highlight the need to balance the cost of the project with the economic benefits to the area. We agree with the need to achieve the best value for money during major infrastructure works. However, this consultation does not recognise</p>	These considerations relating to potential construction and economic impacts will also inform the ongoing development of the scheme’s design, with a view to minimising temporary impacts during construction and in the permanent state post-construction. This will include the aim of minimising the amount of land needing to be acquired for the scheme.

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
	<p>the economic benefits that the food and farming sector delivers to this area, and we believe Highways England should seek ways in which to reduce the impact of these works on farm and food businesses, during and after construction.</p> <p>For example, farm businesses in our county contribute £217 million GVA annually with an output of £564 million agricultural output each year.</p> <p>Farm business support a huge range of other rural businesses such as feed, seed and fertiliser suppliers; machinery dealers, mechanics and engineers; legal, financial and advisory services; haulage and delivery companies; veterinary, genetics and nutritional specialists; builders, electricians and plumbers; local wholesalers and markets to name but a few.</p> <p>In addition, farm businesses themselves employ over 12,300 full time workers on holdings across the county and thousands of other part-time and seasonal workers.</p> <p>Our farmers grow arable and horticultural crops, sheep, beef, pigs and poultry and produce milk for sale in local, national and international markets – as well as produce environmental outcomes for the benefit and enjoyment of all.</p>	

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
	<p><b>Conclusion</b>                      The NFU believes that Option 2 would cause severe damage to our members’ farm businesses and take far too much land out of agriculture production and therefore our preference is that Option 1 is taken forward.</p> <p>Highways England must take no more land than necessary to build the new road scheme so that the impact on the viability of farm businesses is reduced. Land taken on a temporary basis must be returned and reinstated in condition suitable for agricultural production.</p>	
Somerset County Council	<p>The Council notes Highways England’s conclusion that at this stage, no option has clearly better performance in all aspects of safety and operation, environmental impacts and value for money; and that a judgement will need to be made on the balance of these aspects, which should include stakeholder feedback, in reaching a conclusion about the best option for a preferred route. We note the conclusion that option 2 (F1) performs slightly better than option 1 (A2) in economic terms; option 1 (A2) is the better option in environmental terms; and option 2 (F1) is better in terms of safety, buildability and maintenance.</p>	<p>The relative advantages and disadvantages of the two options have been assessed and compared, taking into consideration the consultation feedback, as set out in the Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website. This has led to Option 1 being chosen as the preferred route.</p>

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
Somerset County Council	<p>The Council has concluded based on the available information that it is not appropriate to express a route preference at this stage in the process, and that the choice of the preferred route should be a matter for Highways England to determine, taking into account community and stakeholder feedback from the consultation process along with appropriate technical appraisals.</p>	
Somerset County Council	<p><b>Highways and Transport Issues</b>            The Council has engaged with Highways England at a strategic level in developing the proposals but anticipates a number of matters in relation to the preferred route will have to be resolved in detail with Highways England if adversarial representation to the Planning Inspectorate Examination is to be avoided following submission of the Development Consent Order application. Such matters are likely to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact of the scheme on the local road network, including any TROs to regulate use of former A303 if necessary, and agreement in relation to construction access and construction vehicle routing.</li> <li>• Design of local road elements of the scheme, including alterations of junctions and side roads as appropriate.</li> <li>• Flood risk and surface water drainage.</li> <li>• Rights-of-way and access, including segregated crossings.</li> <li>• De-trunking and transfer of former Highways England assets to Somerset County Council.</li> </ul>	<p>Highways England will seek to liaise closely with Somerset CC during the ongoing development of the scheme, with the aim of securing an agreed best solution for a combination of local and longer-distance traffic movements, including non-motorised movements. This will include ensuring there is no increased risk of flooding arising from the scheme.</p>

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requirements for local Traffic Regulation Orders.</li> </ul>	
Somerset County Council	<p><b>Construction Management</b> The impact of scheme construction and movement of materials is not set out in the consultation documents at this stage and The Council anticipates that a detailed construction traffic management plan will need to be agreed as part of the Development Consent Order process, explaining how construction impacts, in particular movement of materials will be minimised and mitigated. There could be considerable impact on the local highway network and in such circumstances the Council will seek to protect its roads under the legal provisions available.</p>	A construction traffic management plan will be developed working collaboratively with Somerset CC, in preparing for the DCO process. This will include the presentation of related proposals at the next consultation stage, enabling others to comment and input to the preparation of the plan.
Somerset County Council	<p><b>Junctions and side roads</b> The Council notes in the TAR that all junctions are currently designed to fully grade-separated standards and that this approach will be reviewed as relevant design parameters become available.</p>	All matters to do with the proposed junction arrangements and interaction with the local road network will be reviewed by working collaboratively with Somerset CC. The aim is to develop an agreed best solution serving a combination of local and longer-distance traffic movements, including non-motorised movements.
Somerset County Council	<p>Option 1 (A2) proposes two junction locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At Downhead Lane to enable traffic to interchange between Steart Hill, Howell Hill and Downhead Lane and the proposed road; and</li> <li>• At Hazlegrove, enabling interchange between the proposed road and the A359, High Street Sparkford, the access to Hazlegrove House and the Sparkford services.</li> </ul>	
Somerset County Council	Option 2 (F1) proposes only a junction at Hazlegrove. A junction at the centre of the scheme is not proposed due to retention of the existing A303 carriageway as a	

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
	<p>local road, including all the associated minor side road junctions. An overbridge is proposed at the Hazlegrove junction. Up to three further structures are proposed including accommodation bridges at Vale Farm and Downhead Lane, and a road overbridge at Steart Hill.</p>	
Somerset County Council	<p>The TAR notes the proposed size and layout of these junctions will be determined during further development and will be based upon predicted traffic volumes and relevant design standards.</p>	
Somerset County Council	<p>Further dialogue with The Council will be required following selection of the preferred route in order to ensure that that the impact of the proposed scheme and associated junction strategy on local traffic movement, safety and accessibility are fully quantified by Highways England, and understood by all parties, with any necessary mitigations agreed.</p>	
Somerset County Council	<p>Engagement with The Council will be essential in order that safe and appropriate layouts and designs are agreed for any elements of the scheme interfacing with or impacting on the local road network. This includes junctions, overbridges and underpasses, changes to alignment of side roads or any other elements of the scheme. The TAR includes an initial safety review of the indicative proposals for junctions, overbridges and underpasses etc. The Council notes that initial safety concerns have been recorded for a number of the early designs for alignment of underpasses and matters such as curves, tight radii and gradients on side roads. Suggestions for reduced cross sections for some minor side roads are also referred to. Engagement with The</p>	

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
	Council will be necessary to ensure that safe and appropriate design solutions are agreed.	
Somerset County Council	The proposals appear ambiguous about requirements for Non-Motorised User (NMU) provision at this stage, as NMUs may be banned from expressways and an objective for the scheme is to be expressway compatible. The scheme will need to ensure appropriate long-term provision for NMU movement is made particularly if Option 1 (A2) is chosen which does not leave a local road in place particularly for east-west movement.	
Somerset County Council	The TAR notes that if the Downhead Lane junction were removed from Option 1 (A2), the economic case for the scheme would be expected to improve. The Council expects good levels of local connectivity between the local road network and the new road and is of the strong opinion at this point in the process, that a junction should be retained at Downhead Lane under this option.	
Somerset County Council	<p><b>Flood Risk and Damage</b></p> <p>Detailed proposals for drainage and flood risk management are not set out in the consultation documents and the Council will require further information on those matters in order to agree that any temporary proposals and permanent solutions have adequately considered all flood risk and drainage considerations, including how the drainage system will function once it is constructed. It will be imperative to ensure that this scheme does not increase the flood risk in other areas.</p>	<p>This aspect will also feature within the discussions to be held as part of our collaborative working with Somerset CC. The scheme will be designed and constructed to ensure it does not give rise to any increase to the risk of flooding. This will be managed through the implementation of an appropriate drainage strategy - such as through the use of balancing ponds, drainage ditches, pipes and gulleys - to ensure that the scheme does not increase the susceptibility of the local area to flooding.</p>



**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
Somerset County Council	<p><b>Public Rights-of-way</b>                      The TAR identifies several Public Rights-of-ways (PRoW) and restricted byways within the vicinity of the route options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Option 1 (A2): 21 footpaths, two bridleways, and two restricted byways</li> <li>• Option 2 (F1): 14 footpaths, one cycle route, two bridleways and one restricted byway</li> </ul>	<p>All aspects to do with maintaining and/or enhancing public rights-of-way affected by the scheme will be captured by the proposals we look to develop through working collaboratively with Somerset CC. This will include presenting our proposals at the next consultation stage to obtain the views of others before finalising the scheme’s design.                      We also confirm that Somerset CC’s ‘Rights-of-way Improvement Plan 2’ will be taken into consideration during the development of scheme solutions.</p>
Somerset County Council	<p>Both options being consulted on would result in the severance of several of these PRoWs. The technical appraisal report notes that these severed PRoWs would likely be replaced in the form of footbridges or underpasses, if deemed necessary following the completion of NMU surveys.</p>	
Somerset County Council	<p>Both options being consulted on would result in the severance of several of these PRoWs. The technical appraisal report notes that these severed PRoWs would likely be replaced in the form of footbridges or underpasses, if deemed necessary following the completion of NMU surveys. It is noted that the Council’s adopted ‘Rights-of-way improvement plan 2’ is missing from the policy summary within the technical appraisal report and this contains several action and policy statements which are relevant to the scheme, particularly Action 1.4 and policy statements 3.1, 3.2 and 3.10.</p>	
Somerset County Council	<p>Mitigation for severed ProWs will be necessary and this will either be in the form of diversion to the closest over/underbridge or the provision of a purpose built crossing for NMUs. Engagement with the Council will</p>	

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
	<p>be essential in order that appropriate off-road space for NMUs is provided, appropriate parapet heights are provided particularly for equestrians, and appropriate diversion alignments are agreed. Where the mitigation is provision of a dedicated NMU over/underbridge then every consideration should be given to providing access for all NMUs, and looking at what local improvements could be made either in physical or legal status to improve the situation for NMUs.</p>	
Somerset County Council	<p>It is noted that an indicative design solution is yet to be developed to retain an existing footpath through the proposed Hazelgrove junction. Engagement with The Council will be needed to ensure an appropriate solution is agreed.</p>	
Somerset County Council	<p>Any NMU studies should not be taken as a reflection of lack of demand. The current flows on the A303 are likely to be a deterrent for many NMUs in using the current path network.</p>	<p>No preconceived views will influence the development of appropriate proposals for maintaining and/or improving rights-of-way accommodating NMU movements affected by the scheme. Discussions will be held with local user group representatives as suggested.</p>
Somerset County Council	<p>It is highly recommended that detailed discussion takes place with local user group representatives to ensure that any routes believed to carry public rights, or higher rights than are already recorded, are captured and considered as part of proposal development.</p>	
Somerset County Council	<p>This development presents an opportunity to address an issue at Ilchester where a public bridleway now crosses the A303 at grade, following a public inquiry which upgraded the footpath to a bridleway on the line of the old road as opposed to a new accommodation bridge. The bridge parapets now require upgrading in order that the bridleway rights can be diverted onto the</p>	<p>This comment covers an issue that is outside the scope of the scheme. The issue should be pursued separately between Highways England and Somerset CC.</p>

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
	<p>bridge. The current situation leaves Highways England exposed to potential enforcement action and the County Council are keen to work towards resolution of this issue. Whilst it falls just outside of the proposal, there could be significant cost savings to be made by including these works within the scheme. A second application has been made to delete the bridleway but this will not be determined for many years. Should Highways England wish to include the parapet works within the scheme then The Council will explore what opportunity there may be to determine the application as a priority. Whatever the recommendation is of the investigation into the second application, there is likely to be opposition to it, thus involving a referral to the Secretary of State for confirmation/ determination.</p>	
Somerset County Council	<p><b>De-trunking and transfer of former Highways England assets to Somerset County Council.</b></p> <p>Both the consultation options provide for sections of the existing A303 to be replaced by a new route. The existing road, where superseded by the new route, will be ‘detrunked’, downgraded or stopped up as circumstances require. Whichever way, those redundant sections of road will revert either to The Council as the Local Highway Authority, or to private interests if stopped up.</p>	<p>Arrangements for detrunking and transferring sections of the existing A303 will form part of the continuing discussions to be held between Highways England and Somerset CC about the scheme and its ongoing development.</p>
Somerset County Council	<p>The scheme details do not seek to identify the end uses of all parts of the road, but suggest that sections will need to be kept open for local use. For those sections which fall to the responsibility of the Council</p>	

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
	<p>under Development Consent Order de-trunking procedures, it is normal practice for the Local Highway Authority to be compensated by HE for the additional maintenance burden the roads will present to the Council. The Council therefore needs to have agreed, when the Development Consent Order application is submitted, what the compensatory arrangements will be and what will be the end uses of all redundant sections of the A303 route.</p>	
Somerset County Council	<p><b>Requirements for local Traffic Regulation Orders.</b> The Council will need to be assured, before the Development Consent Order application is made, that all identified necessary TROs are included in the process, in particular that it is not left for the Council to address TROs necessary to regulate traffic on the existing county road network before, during or after construction, or on any de-trunked sections of the existing A303.</p>	<p>TRO considerations will form part of the continuing discussions to be held between Highways England and Somerset CC about the scheme and its ongoing development.</p>
Somerset Ramblers	<p>We would, however, stress that there should be no at-grade crossings for any public right-of-way and that proper provision for ensuring access to existing rights-of-way is retained in a safe way. Safe opportunities to connect RoW north and south of the new road must also be provided.</p>	<p>It is an objective of the scheme to provide safe rights-of-way across the road that are easy for non-motorised users to use. At-grade crossings are not currently being considered. Related proposals will be presented at the next consultation stage.</p>
Somerset Wildlife Trust	<p>Somerset Wildlife Trust would hope that this infrastructure project upholds the ambitions of the Government's White Paper and the guidance of the NPPF and aims at not just minimising impacts on the natural environment but also aims to enhance biodiversity through the scheme by careful</p>	<p>Opportunities to enhance biodiversity will be considered as part of the scheme's continuing development. Related proposals and accompanying preliminary environmental information will be presented at the next consultation stage, prior to a full Environmental Statement being published to accompany the planning application for development consent.</p>

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
	consideration to habitat creation and enhancement in the post-scheme landscape, with priority given to achieving strong habitat connectivity.	
South Somerset Bridleways Association	No mention is made of multiuser paths. Nor does this consultation appear to comply with many of Transport Focus' recommendations in 'Cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians: a summary of priorities for Highways England's Network'	This public consultation has canvassed the views of local residents, the travelling public, statutory bodies and user groups, such as the South Somerset Bridleways Association, on their views about scheme, having regard to the problems they face on the existing road and how might wish the scheme to address those problems. The feedback has covered all journey types and all types of user, providing a good foundation of background knowledge upon which to develop the design of the scheme in line with relevant policies, strategies and standards. This will inform the scheme's continuing development and we will be presenting our proposals for accommodating cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians at the next consultation stage.
Sparkford Parish Council	In summary either option would have little impact on Sparkford but the Parish Council are concerned about what is happening to the roundabout and access to Hazelgrove School east and west bound if they are not having run off to a roundabout like Wincanton. How will traffic access Queen Camel and the other smaller hamlets? Are they going to come off at North Cadbury and come through our village?	A grade-separated junction is proposed at Hazlegrove. This will include entry and exit slip roads in each direction providing a safe and convenient connection to the dual carriageway from locations such as Hazlegrove School, Sparkford and Queen Camel. Further details will be provided at the next consultation stage.
The Coal Authority	Responded confirming 'no comment' to make on the scheme.	No issues arising.
West Camel Parish Council	Should option 1 be chosen, how will the small local roads of West Camel and other villages be saved from 'rat run' traffic?	The relative advantages and disadvantages of the two options have been assessed and compared, taking into consideration the consultation feedback, as set out in the Scheme Assessment Report which can be found on the scheme website. Moving forward, potential environmental impacts will continue to be
West Camel Parish Council	Option 1 has a far greater and direct impact to main settlements of West Camel and so there is clear	

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
	<p>majority preference for Option 2 to be taken forward. In the following pages, option 1 therefore carries more issues and suggestions to help mitigate the visual, noise and environmental pollutions we will be directly subjected to should this option go ahead.</p> <p>We stress the necessity of a full east/west link road between Sparkford/Hazlegrove and Podimore roundabout (such as the existing A303) in addition to the new expressway regardless of the option chosen. This will help mitigate safety concerns during periods of construction and whenever the new expressway is compromised, in addition to providing local access. Construction of Option 2 (or indeed either of the other two discarded routes B4 or E4) would leave the existing A303 intact between Sparkford and Podimore to take overflow traffic in times of congestion due to accident or maintenance. This would save traffic diverting onto local lanes which are not capable of handling this type and volume of traffic.</p>	<p>assessed and will inform the more detailed design proposals for the scheme, with accompanying mitigation to avoid or reduce impacts. In addition, Highways England is committed to creating a network that works for the local communities as well as longer distance traffic. Accommodating local traffic movements safely and efficiently will be integral to optimising the overall scheme proposals, as will accommodating safe walking, cycling and equestrian movements. This includes accommodating safe movements during construction. Details will be presented at the next consultation stage. It is anticipated that the scheme will relieve rather than increase rat-running pressures - this can be reviewed at the next consultation stage with the help of an updated traffic model.</p>
West Camel Parish Council	<p>West Camel has a history of flooding and as such demands that proper consideration should be given to the flooding impacts to the village. Works should not simply plan to 'not make matters worse', but should look to improve measures during this once in a lifetime opportunity.</p>	<p>The responsibility of the scheme and the funding of it is to ensure it does not give rise to any increased risk of flooding. This will be managed through the implementation of an appropriate drainage strategy - such as through the use of balancing ponds, drainage ditches, pipes and gulleys - to ensure that the scheme does not increase the susceptibility of the local area to flooding. More information will be presented at the next consultation stage.</p>
West Camel Parish Council	<p>The proposed junction at Downhead for option 1 should be removed from all planning. 10 lanes of roadway will be created around the proposed junction, plus the</p>	<p>The Downhead junction would provide access for traffic and to local villagers which is currently provided by a number of side roads. It is not expected that rat-run traffic would increase across</p>

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
	<p>creation of a new highway standard carriageway in place of Slate Lane. The overwhelming response of parishioners is that no additional junction should be created at Downhead, which will simply encourage ‘rat run’ traffic. An east/west link road as above negates the need for this.</p>	<p>the local area. There will be a further opportunity to review this at the next consultation stage, informed by updated traffic modelling.</p>
<p>West Camel Parish Council</p>	<p>Highways England describe Option 2 as being the better option in economic terms, safety, buildability and maintenance with environmental concerns more favourable for Option 1, so why not simply alter the Option 2 route to avoid Annis Hill wood? We would suggest that Highways England consider realigning Option 2 proposals to reflect initially the line shown in discarded Option B4 i.e. after leaving Podimore overbridge the route should pass to the north of Annis Hill Wood, before re-joining the existing line of Option 2. This would provide greater separation from properties, Newclose &amp; Mead Farms as well as other properties in Downhead.</p>	<p>The Option 2 presented for consultation was identified to be the best alignment for this route corridor from a sifting process described in the Technical Appraisal Report. The Scheme Assessment Report now describes why Option 1 is preferred over Option 2.</p>
<p>West Camel Parish Council</p>	<p>Of the four options considered in the TAR, only one (A2 which became Option 1) impacts the continuity of the existing A303. Many residents have commented that keeping the existing A303 intact between Sparkford and Podimore would –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides a sensible diversion route in the event of an accident or maintenance on the new A303 Expressway</li> <li>• Avoids the need to use the A359 / Queen Camel (past new school – not on HE plans!) / Bridgehampton / Stockwich Cross and Podimore village as an alternative diversion route.</li> </ul>	<p>These considerations were, as relevant and appropriate, taken into account by the assessment informing the choice of Option 1 as the preferred route. They will continue to inform the design of the scheme during its ongoing development to ensure the accompanying proposals best accommodate local community movements and provide resilience in the event of incidents on the network.</p>

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This could open up possibilities for local residents to use /walk to the bakery.</li> <li>• Would by default enhance community connectivity with Downhead and Steart Hill.</li> <li>• Would provide good access from Yeovilton Base to the new A303 Expressway.</li> <li>• Would allow slow moving agricultural traffic to move around the area with ease</li> </ul>	
West Camel Parish Council	For many years after the completion of this upgrade, traffic will queue at Podimore as the first major westbound interchange on the new expressway. Should option 1 be chosen, how will the small local roads of West Camel and other villages be saved from 'rat run' traffic?	An upgrade of the Podimore Roundabout is part of the Government's planned programme of improvements, contained in its Road Investment Strategy, for upgrading the A303/A358 corridor to a dual carriageway expressway. However, it is not part of this scheme; instead it is due to be brought forward in future road investment periods. It is anticipated that this scheme will in its own right relieve rather than increase rat-running pressures - this can be reviewed at the next consultation stage with the help of an updated traffic model.
West Camel Parish Council	A major concern for residents of West Camel Village is about minimising the existing 'Rat-Run' usage by vehicles (HGVs, LGVs (white van man) and Cars) which pass through West Camel travelling north / south or south west / north west. Increased 'rat run' traffic will cause more accidents and injuries as travellers seek to avoid the major trunk route during closures and peak flows.	



**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
West Camel Parish Council	<p>Residents expressed an overwhelming preference for –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No junctions on either option between Sparkford and Podimore and retain / realign the existing A303 to facilitate construction of the proposed Expressway in a cutting.</li> <li>• This will facilitate the construction of a bridge to connect Downhead Lane to the existing A303 and negate the need to upgrade Slate Lane – placing the new Expressway in a cutting at Conigore would facilitate construction of a bridge connecting Steart Hill to the retained (or realigned) old A303 to channel HGV traffic (Hopkins) east or west to join the Expressway at Podimore or Sparkford rather than using Howell Hill through West Camel.</li> </ul>	<p>These preferences will be taken into consideration as part of the ongoing scheme development. The design proposals, including junction arrangements, will be presented at the next consultation stage for further comment.</p>
West Camel Parish Council	<p>Both options destroy roughly equal amounts of productive farmland, with Option 1 directly affecting many more people who live close to this route, and Option 2 destroying a currently undisturbed valley and woodland.</p>	<p>These considerations have fed into the overall assessment Informing the choice of Option 1 as the preferred route. As relevant and appropriate, they will continue to inform the ongoing development and design of the scheme.</p>
West Camel Parish Council	<p>Against Option1 – Most of Option 1 would also be built on unspoilt countryside and good farmland. Proximity to the settlement of West Camel, potential for increased noise and pollution especially from the raised section east of Conigore Corner.</p>	
West Camel Parish Council	<p>Residents voiced concerns about congestion during construction should Option 1 be chosen, with possibly</p>	<p>Construction-related issues have been taken into consideration in the choice of preferred route. The existing A303 will remain open</p>

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
	3+ years of delayed traffic trying to find alternative routes to the existing A303.	during construction and a construction traffic management plan will be developed to ensure any temporary disruption is minimised. Related details will be presented at the next consultation stage.
West Camel Parish Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The construction phase is longer for option 1 and would disrupt travel for a far greater proportion if its build time.</li> </ul>	
West Camel Parish Council	<p>West Camel has a history of flooding and as such demands that proper consideration should be given to the flooding impacts to the village. Works should not simply plan to ‘not make matters worse’, but should look to improve measures during this once in a lifetime opportunity.</p> <p>While it is acknowledged that modern road construction should adequately deal with surface water issues, concern remains in a community with a serious history of flooding –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In any failure situation (option 1) – water travels downhill – into West Camel.</li> <li>• Designs need to be shared, publicly in detail with the community for both options including Dyke Brook and eventual outfall to the river system.</li> <li>• Existing / retained A303 surface water drainage is inadequate and needs to be re-engineered before retained carriageway is declassified and handed to Somerset County Council – again work with the community who have local knowledge.</li> <li>• Surface water discharge design should not impact existing River Cam flow rates – i.e. additional downstream discharge from A303 could cause flooding upstream in West Camel.</li> </ul>	<p>The responsibility of the scheme and the funding of it is to ensure it does not give rise to any increased risk of flooding. This will be managed through the implementation of an appropriate drainage strategy - such as through the use of balancing ponds, drainage ditches, pipes and gulleys - to ensure that the scheme does not increase the susceptibility of the local area to flooding. More information will be presented at the next consultation stage, prior to a full Environmental Statement being published to accompany the planning application for development consent. This will include collaborative engagement with Somerset CC and the Environment Agency in considering measures relevant to the existing road as well as the new dual carriageway.</p>

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
West Camel Parish Council	A number of residents expressed concern over how close to their homes either option might be – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The owners of Newclose Farm have asked – can the road be moved further away? (see comments on Route Alignment below).</li> </ul>	Concerns relating to the proximity of Option 2 to property fall away with the choice of Option 1 as the preferred route. But potential impacts on people and property will remain a key consideration feeding into the design of the scheme proposals for Option 1, with accompanying mitigation measures to avoid or reduce impacts. More detailed proposals will be presented at the next consultation stage.
West Camel Parish Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orchard Park – residents pointed out that option 1 would be only 200m from their homes.</li> </ul>	
West Camel Parish Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two properties at Conigore Corner would be less than 30m from the proposed dual carriageway as would 'Blue haze' in neighbouring QC parish.</li> </ul>	
West Camel Parish Council	Under Option 1 the proposed section of dual carriageway to the east and south of Conigore Corner appears to be elevated some 6m above the existing field level. We can only assume that this is to facilitate ease of construction and maintaining traffic flow during construction? The more logical construction of a cutting, in similar fashion to the route to the west, would help negate noise, pollution and visual impact.	The design of Option 1 will be optimised now that has been chosen as the preferred route. Heights of embankments and depths of cuttings will be clarified as part of the optimisation, with details presented at the next consultation stage when further comment will be invited before the design is finalised.
West Camel Parish Council	Highways England technical document clearly states that Option 1 would be the least safe route, and is also the only route option where there are no realistic route alternatives.	Safety is a foremost consideration, and Option 1 will be developed to a standard, with accompanying grade-separated junctions, that is able to provide a wholly safe service for all users – motorised and non-motorised. The new dual carriageway will immediately be more resilient than the existing single carriageway road in providing greater capacity, able to keep traffic flowing on the A303 itself at times of incidents, avoiding diversion to existing roads. But contingency plans will also be reviewed to consider the management arrangements needing to be implemented if incidents arose causing the road to be totally closed.
West Camel Parish Council	Any incident/closure would lead to drivers using poor local country roads, leading to yet more safety issues for local residents and causing severe disruption.  We suggest Highways look to create and manage a proper alternative route for the anticipated incidents	

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
	and closures alongside the complete length of the proposed expressway.	
West Camel Parish Council	Against Option 2 – The destruction of unspoilt countryside and farmland. The severance of four large farms, which would make conducting their business more difficult. If Option 2 is chosen, then, in addition to the two road bridges mentioned on the plans, it would be necessary to construct at least three extra bridges for farm vehicles and machinery from the affected farms to access land that would be severed.	These considerations fall away following the choice of Option 1 as the preferred route.
West Camel Parish Council	Potential flooding issues have been raised concerning Option 2, although this is limited to fields and not residential dwellings as in Option 1. Common concerns apply equally to Option 2 -	
West Camel Parish Council	Several residents queried concerns raised over loss of farm land and the following points were made – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opponents of Option 2 cite the loss of relatively unspoilt farmland, bio-diversity etc.</li> <li>• Farmers in the Sparkford Vale are concerned about managing their farms which may be divided should Option2 be built.</li> <li>• Some farmers do farm to a very high eco-friendly standard, lay hedges and keep ditches clear and will be devastated by the loss of farm land and division of their farms.</li> <li>• From a local farmer – most of the bio-diversity was damaged years ago when field hedges were ripped out to facilitate modern arable farming methods.</li> </ul>	The concerns raised in relation to Option 2 fall away with the choice of Option 1 as the preferred route. But farming and biodiversity will still be important considerations informing the design of the scheme proposals for Option 1, with accompanying mitigation measures to avoid or reduce impacts. More detailed proposals will be presented at the next consultation stage.

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION – LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS RESPONSE LOG**

Organisation	Organisation comments	Highways England Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wildlife adapts as can be seen from existing stretches of dualled A303 e.g. Sparkford.</li> <li>• Unspoiled by human habitation perhaps but scarred by modern farming techniques requiring large fields.</li> </ul>	
Woodland Trust	<p>Ancient woodland and wood pasture are irreplaceable habitats; once lost they cannot be recreated. The Trust believes that any development resulting in damage or loss to an ancient woodland or wood pasture is unacceptable and that all possible measures should be explored in order to avoid these losses. The Woodland Trust objects to both route options 1 and 2 on the basis of damage and loss to ancient woodland and wood pasture. We believe Highways England need to further explore other options to avoid these irreplaceable and valuable habitats. Furthermore it is apparent that further surveys need to be undertaken to determine whether there are any ancient or veteran trees within the site that have not been previously identified.</p>	<p>Highways England is content that Option 1 provides the best route for improving this section of the A303, based on the assessments set out in the Technical Appraisal Report and Scheme Assessment Report. Potential effects on ancient woodland and woodland pasture will continue to be explored as part of the ongoing environmental impact assessment of the developing scheme proposals. A full arboricultural survey will be undertaken to inform the assessment. The woodland habitats, including those designated as Ancient Woodland, are highly valued, and mitigation measures will be included as part of the scheme proposals to ensure that any adverse environmental effects are avoided or reduced or, where practicable, seek enhancement by joining up pockets of existing woodland to reduce fragmentation. Further preliminary information will be presented at the next consultation stage, prior to a full Environmental Statement being published to accompany the planning application for development consent.</p>

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## **Appendix D – Public consultation materials**

In this appendix, the following materials are included:

- Department for Transport press release;
- Example letter to organisations;
- Letter to residents within 1500m of either route; and
- Letter to landholders within 150m of either route.


In addition to the materials within the appendix, there are a series of materials which available on the Highways England Citizen Space website for scheme, which can be found here:

<https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/he/a303-sparkford-to-ilchester/>

The materials available on the website include:

- the scheme brochure;
- the questionnaire;
- the public consultation event exhibition banners;
- separate diagrams of the two route options;
- the scheme Technical Appraisal Report;
- the consultation poster; and
- the Environmental Constraints Map.

## Department for Transport press release

 Search [Departments](#) [Worldwide](#) [How government works](#) [Get involved](#)  
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News story

### **£170 million plan to dual vital Somerset road**

From: [Department for Transport, Highways England, and The Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP](#)  
Part of: [Road network and traffic](#)  
First published: 13 February 2017  
Last updated: 23 February 2017, [see all updates](#)

Drivers will see quicker, safer and more reliable journeys in Somerset under government plans to tackle congestion on the A303.



The key route between Sparkford and Ilchester is being upgraded to relieve the over-congested road and create 30 miles of dual carriageway between Mere and South Petherton.

The £170 million plan is part of the [government's £15 billion investment in our motorways and major A roads between 2015 and 2020](#) – the biggest in a generation.

More than 26,000 vehicles use this stretch of road a day, double the number it was designed for. Dualling the route will cut journey times and new junctions will enhance safety.

[Have your say on the A303 Sparkford to Ilchester upgrade.](#)

Highways England is holding the following public information events:

- 12.00 noon to 8.30pm, Thursday 23 February: Sparkford Inn Function Room, Sparkford
- 10.00am to 5.00pm, Queen Camel Memorial Hall, High Street, Queen Camel, Yeovil
- 10.00am to 6.00pm, Friday, 10 March: Davis Hall, Howell Hill, West Camel, Yeovil

#### **Roads media enquiries**

Press enquiries  
020 7944 3021

Out of hours  
020 7944 4292

Switchboard  
0300 330 3000

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Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

“ Almost 4 million trips are made on the A303 every year and we are investing more than £2 billion to improve these motorists’ journeys, making them quicker and safer.

“ Tackling congestion on this vital road will also help boost the economy in the south-west, unlock thousands of jobs and homes and promote tourism.”

Work will include making junctions safer as well as providing better links for pedestrians and cyclists.

Highways England is consulting on the 2 routes and is urging residents to have their say on the plans. The consultation runs from 15 February to 29 March 2017.

The preferred route between Sparkford and Ilchester is due to be announced in autumn this year. Work is expected to start in 2020.

Highways England chief executive Jim O’Sullivan said:

“ This scheme will be really good news for people travelling to and from the south-west, particularly during the busy summer months.

“ Our consultation and public exhibitions will provide an excellent opportunity to explain further our plans and to hear feedback from people on our proposals to deliver the scheme.”

A separate consultation on building a [tunnel for the A303 near Stonehenge](#) is also underway. This will further improve journeys on the main road between London and the south-west.

Further details on upgrading the A358 between Taunton and Southfields will also be revealed shortly.



## Example letter to organisations



Our ref: OptionsConsultation2017

[Insert details]

David Stock  
Project Manager  
2/07K Temple Quay House  
2 The Square  
Temple Quay  
Bristol BS1 6HA

Enquiries: 0300 123 5000

7 February 2017

[Insert Sir/Madam]

### **A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling Public consultation from Wednesday 15 February until Wednesday 29 March 2017**

The A303/A358 corridor is a vital connection between the south west and London and the south east. Highways England has been working on proposals to upgrade the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester to a dual carriageway standard, creating a continuous 30-mile stretch of dual carriageway between South Petherton and Mere. This section acts as a bottleneck for users, causing congestion, particularly in the summer months and at weekends.

The scheme is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project and forms part of a programme of planned improvements to the A303/A358 corridor. The scheme aims to relieve congestion, provide reliable journey times, unlock economic growth and improve safety whilst protecting the environment.

Following a detailed technical assessment process we have shortlisted two route options and would welcome your views before a decision on a preferred route option is made.

#### **Event invitation**

You are invited to attend a special preview event to view the proposed route option designs. Opening at 5.30pm, we will give a brief welcome presentation introducing the scheme at 6.00pm. The project team will be available to talk to throughout the event.

Date	Venue	Time
Tuesday 14 February 2017	Haynes International Motor Museum Sparkford, Yeovil, Somerset BA22 7LH	5.30pm to 8.30pm, welcome presentation at 6.00pm

If you are unable to attend the event above, you can still participate in the public consultation in the following ways:

#### **View the proposed route options online**

All consultation information will be available on our scheme webpage from Wednesday 15 February 2017 including a brochure with a summary of the proposed route options, event information boards and a link to the consultation questionnaire. For more information, go to: [www.highways.gov.uk/Sparkford-to-Ilchester](http://www.highways.gov.uk/Sparkford-to-Ilchester)

#### **Attend a public information event**

Meet the project team and view the proposed route options at the following events:

Date	Venue	Time
Thursday 23 February 2017	Sparkford Inn, High Street, Sparkford, Yeovil, BA22 7JH	12.00 midday to 8.00pm
Saturday 25 February 2017	Queen Camel Memorial Hall, High Street, Queen Camel, Yeovil, BA22 7NF	10.00am to 5.00pm
Friday 10 March 2017	Davis Hall, Howell Hill, West Camel, Yeovil, BA22 7QX	10.00am to 6.00pm

### Visit a public information point

Consultation materials will be available to view from Wednesday 15 February until Wednesday 29 March 2017 during normal opening hours at the following places:

Public Information Points	
Wincanton Library, 7 Carrington Way, Wincanton, Somerset, BA9 9JS	Barrington Court, Barrington, Ilminster, TA19 0NQ
Yeovil Library, King George Street, Yeovil, Somerset, BA20 1PZ	Lytes Cary Manor, near Somerton, Somerset, TA11 7HU
South Petherton Library, St. James Street, South Petherton, Somerset, TA13 5BS	Montacute House, Montacute, TA15 6XP
Taunton Library, Paul Street, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 3XZ	Somerset County Council, County Hall, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 4DY
Martock Library, The Shopping Centre, Martock, Somerset, TA12 6DL	South Somerset District Council, Brympton Way, Yeovil, Somerset, BA20 2HT

### Have your say

**Please complete a short questionnaire to let us know what you think of the proposals.**

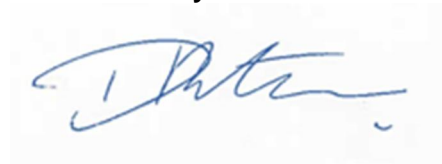
You can use one of the following methods to contact us and/or respond to the consultation:

- Complete the questionnaire online at: [www.highways.gov.uk/Sparkford-to-Ilchester](http://www.highways.gov.uk/Sparkford-to-Ilchester)
- Email: [A303SparkfordrollchesterDualling@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:A303SparkfordrollchesterDualling@highwaysengland.co.uk)
- Call: 0300 123 5000 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)
- Post all responses to: A303 Sparkford - Ilchester Dualling, Freepost Consultation, FPN 4016
- Write to us at: A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Project Team, Highways England, 2/07k Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6HA

**The deadline for responses is 11.59pm on Wednesday 29 March 2017.**

**We look forward to hearing from you.**

**Yours sincerely**



**David Stock**

**Major Projects South West**

**Email:** [A303SparkfordtollchesterDualling@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:A303SparkfordtollchesterDualling@highwaysengland.co.uk)

**Tel:** 0300 123 5000

## **Letter to residents within 1500m of either route**



Our ref: OptionsConsultation2017

David Stock  
2/07K Temple Quay House  
2 The Square  
Temple Quay  
Bristol  
BS1 6HA

Enquiries: 0300 123 5000

February 2017

Dear Occupier,

### **A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling Public Consultation from Wednesday 15 February until Wednesday 29 March 2017**

The A303/A358 corridor is a vital connection between the south west and London and the south east. Highways England has been working on proposals to upgrade the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester to a dual carriageway standard, creating a continuous 30 mile stretch of dual carriageway between South Petherton and Mere. This section acts as a bottleneck for users, causing congestion, particularly in the summer months and at weekends.

The scheme is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project and forms part of a programme of planned improvements to the A303/A358 corridor. The scheme aims to relieve congestion, provide reliable journey times, unlock economic growth and improve safety whilst protecting the environment.

Following a detailed technical assessment process we have shortlisted two route options and would welcome your views before a decision on a preferred route option is made. We would like to invite you to take part in our public consultation, which will run from Wednesday 15 February until Wednesday 29 March 2017.

#### **How to get involved and respond to the consultation**

##### **View the proposed route options online**

All consultation information will be available on our scheme webpage from Wednesday 15 February 2017, including a brochure with a summary of the proposed route options, event information boards, and a link to the consultation questionnaire. For more information, go to: [www.highways.gov.uk/Sparkford-to-Ilchester](http://www.highways.gov.uk/Sparkford-to-Ilchester)

##### **Attend a public information event**

Meet the project team and view the proposed route options at the following events:

Date	Venue	Time
Thursday 23 February 2017	Sparkford Inn, High Street, Sparkford, Yeovil, BA22 7JH	12.00 midday to 8.00pm
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Martock Library, The Shopping Centre, Martock, Somerset, TA12 6DL	South Somerset District Council, Brympton Way, Yeovil, Somerset, BA20 2HT

### Have your say

**Please complete a short questionnaire to let us know what you think of the proposals.**

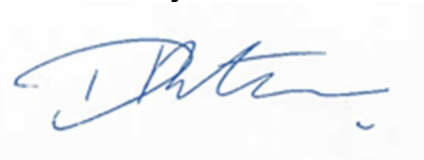
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- Email: [A303SparkfordtoIlchesterDualling@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:A303SparkfordtoIlchesterDualling@highwaysengland.co.uk)
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- Post all responses to: Freepost Consultation, FPN 4016
- Write to us at: A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Project Team, Highways England, 2/07k Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6HA

**The deadline for responses is 11.59pm on Wednesday 29 March 2017.**

**We look forward to hearing from you.**

Yours faithfully



**David Stock**

**Major Projects South West**

**Email:** [A303SparkfordtoIlchesterDualling@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:A303SparkfordtoIlchesterDualling@highwaysengland.co.uk)

**Tel:** 0300 123 5000

## **Letter to landholders within 150m of either route**



Our ref: OptionsConsultation2017

[Insert details]

David Stock  
Project Manager  
2/07K Temple Quay House  
2 The Square  
Temple Quay  
Bristol BS1 6HA

Enquiries: 0300 123 5000

6 February 2017

[insert name]

### **A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling Public Consultation from Wednesday 15 February until Wednesday 29 March 2017**

The A303/A358 corridor is a vital connection between the south west and London and the south east. Highways England has been working on proposals to upgrade the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester to a dual carriageway standard, creating a continuous 30 mile stretch of dual carriageway between South Petherton and Mere. This section acts as a bottleneck for users, causing congestion, particularly in the summer months and at weekends.

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#### **Event invitation**

From our enquiries you have been identified as having an interest in land or property located in the vicinity of the proposed route options. You are invited to attend a special land interest event where you can talk to a member of our team. To arrange an appointment, please contact us by telephone on 0300 470 4465 or by email at: A303SparkfordtoIlchesterDualling@highwaysengland.co.uk

<b>Date</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Time</b>
Wednesday 15 February 2017	Haynes International Motor Museum Sparkford, Yeovil, Somerset BA22 7LH	11.00am to 7.00pm
Thursday 16 February 2017		Appointment only

If you are unable to attend, we are also holding several public information events which you are welcome to attend. You can participate in the public consultation in the following ways:

#### **View the proposed route options online**

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Martock Library, The Shopping Centre, Martock, Somerset, TA12 6DL	South Somerset District Council, Brympton Way, Yeovil, Somerset, BA20 2HT

### Have your say

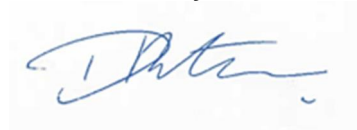
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Yours sincerely



**David Stock**

**Major Projects South West**

**Email:** [A303SparkfordtoIlchesterDualling@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:A303SparkfordtoIlchesterDualling@highwaysengland.co.uk)

**Tel: 0300 123 5000**

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## **Appendix E – Letter responses to the consultation from organisations**

Appendix E has been uploaded separately from the main document to ensure the file size remains manageable.

If you need help accessing this or any other Highways England information, please call **0300 123 5000** and we will help you.

